United Nations A/69/PV.85

General Assembly
Sixty-ninth session

Official Records

85th plenary meeting
Thursday, 16 April 2015, 10 a.m.
New York

President: Mr. Kutesa ..... (Uganda)

The meeting was called to order at 10.10 a.m.

Agenda item 112 (*continued*)

Elections to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other elections

(a) Election of twenty members of the Committee for Programme and Coordination

Note by the Secretary-General (A/69/291/Add.2)

The President: Pursuant to General Assembly decision 42/450, of 17 December 1987, and upon nomination by the Economic and Social Council, the Assembly elects the members of the Committee for Programme and Coordination.

Members will recall that, at its 32nd plenary meeting, held on 29 October 2014, the General Assembly elected 13 members to the Committee for a three-year term of office beginning on 1 January 2015. Members will also recall that, at its 68th plenary meeting, held on 10 December 2014, the General Assembly elected three members to the Committee for a three-year term of office beginning on 1 January 2015. Members will further recall that, by its decision 2014/201 B, of 17 November 2014, the Economic and Social Council postponed the nomination of one member from Asia-Pacific States and three members from Western European and other States for election by the General Assembly for a three-year term beginning on 1 January 2015.

In this connection, the Assembly has before it a note by the Secretary-General, contained in document A/69/291/Add.2. As indicated in that document, by its decision 2015/201 B, of 8 April 2015, the Economic and Social Council nominated Portugal for election by the General Assembly for a term beginning on the date of election and expiring on 31 December 2017.

In accordance with rule 92 of the rules of procedure, all elections should be held by secret ballot and there shall be no nominations. However, I should like to recall paragraph 16 of General Assembly decision 34/401, whereby the practice of dispensing with the secret ballot for elections to subsidiary organs when the number of candidates corresponds to the number of seats to be filled should become standard, unless a delegation specifically requests a vote on a given election.

In the absence of such a request, may I take it that the Assembly decides to proceed to the election on the basis of dispensing with the secret ballot?

It was so decided.

The President: May I therefore take it that the Assembly wishes to declare Portugal elected as a member of the Committee for Programme and Coordination for a term beginning on 16 April 2015 and expiring on 31 December 2017?

It was so decided.

The President: Members are reminded that the Economic and Social Council decided to further postpone the nomination of three members from Western European and other States for election by the General Assembly — one member for a term beginning

This record contains the text of speeches delivered in English and of the translation of speeches delivered in other languages. Corrections should be submitted to the original languages only. They should be incorporated in a copy of the record and sent under the signature of a member of the delegation concerned to the Chief of the Verbatim Reporting Service, room U-0506 (verbatimrecords@un.org). Corrected records will be reissued electronically on the Official Document System of the United Nations (http://documents.un.org).

15-10642 (E)

Accessible document Please recycle

on the date of election by the General Assembly and expiring on 31 December 2015; and two members for terms beginning on the date of election and expiring on 31 December 2017. The Council also decided to postpone the nomination of one member from Asia-Pacific States for a term beginning on the date of election and expiring on 31 December 2017.

The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of sub-item (a) of agenda item 112.

Agenda item 113 (*continued*)

Appointments to fill vacancies in subsidiary organs and other appointments

(f) Appointment of members of the Committee on Conferences

Note by the Secretary-General (A/69/107)

The President: Members will recall that, at its 64th plenary meeting, on 5 December 2014, the Assembly took note of the appointments of the Central African Republic, Namibia, Paraguay and the Russian Federation as members of the Committee on Conferences for a period of three years, beginning on 1 January 2015. Members will also recall that, at its 79th plenary meeting, on 2 February 2015, the Assembly took note of the appointment of France as a member of the Committee on Conferences for a term of office beginning on the date of appointment and ending on 31 December 2017. Members will further recall that the Assembly took note of the appointments of Sri Lanka as a member of the Committee on Conferences for a term of office beginning on 2 April 2015 and ending on 31 December 2017, and Austria as a member of the Committee on Conferences to fill the unexpired term of office of Denmark beginning on 2 April 2015 and ending on 31 December 2016, at its 84th plenary meeting. Members will also recall that one seat from the Asia-Pacific States, for a period beginning on the date of appointment and ending on 31 December 2017, remains vacant.

On the recommendation of the Chair of the Asia-Pacific Group, I have appointed Bahrain as a member of the Committee on Conferences for a term of office beginning on 16 April 2015 and ending on 31 December 2017.

May I take it that the Assembly takes note of this appointment?

It was so decided.

The President: May I take it that it is the wish of the General Assembly to conclude its consideration of sub-item (f) of agenda item 113?

It is so decided.

Agenda items 29 and 109

Report of the Peacebuilding Commission

Report of the Peacebuilding Commission (A/69/818)

Report of the Secretary-General on the Peacebuilding Fund

Report of the Secretary-General on the Peacebuilding Fund (A/69/745)

The President: I am pleased to open today's plenary meeting and joint debate dedicated to one of the key aspects of the work of the United Nations. I congratulate Mr. Olof Skoog and the delegation of Sweden on taking up the important task of chairing the Peacebuilding Commission's Organizational Committee during what will be a significant year for the United Nations peacebuilding architecture. I also thank Mr. Antonio de Aguiar Patriota and the delegation of Brazil for their able leadership as Chair of the Organizational Committee of the Peacebuilding Commission over the past year.

Peacebuilding constitutes one of the core tenets of our collective efforts to foster sustainable peace and stability in post-conflict situations. As stated in the 2014 report of the Secretary-General (A/68/729), peacebuilding lies at the very heart of the United Nations work in countries emerging from conflict. History has shown that conflict-affected countries and communities suffer severe and agonizing losses that may take decades of dedicated attention to overcome. Limiting the risk of relapse into conflict is among the most difficult and complex challenges facing the international community.

The need for sustained engagement in post-conflict areas was evident following the outbreak of the Ebola virus this past year. Hard-won peace gains in Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea were suddenly and unexpectedly put at risk due to the unprecedented epidemic. In a matter of months, important progress that had been made in critical areas, including security, governance, political stability, social cohesion and economic recovery, were put in jeopardy. I commend the Peacebuilding Commission for the efforts it has made in support of the most affected countries and

thank Member States for their continued solidarity with the people of West Africa. I also commend the national Governments in the countries most affected for their steadfast efforts to bring the outbreak under control.

As the two reports being debated today make clear, both the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Fund made significant strides in 2014, including valuable contributions beyond the six countries on the Commission's agenda. The first-ever annual session of the Peacebuilding Commission was also a particularly successful initiative that yielded important outcomes.

In the year ahead, the peacebuilding architecture will undergo a comprehensive review, a major undertaking some 10 years after its establishment. As the Assembly knows, the review process was launched in December based on the important preparatory work of the Peacebuilding Commission. An Advisory Group of experts is currently conducting a number of case studies as well as a policy and institutional review. It is expected to submit its findings and recommendations to the Security Council and the General Assembly before the end of June. Member States will consider the findings through an intergovernmental process that should be concluded by a concurrent decision of the Security Council and the General Assembly before the end of this year. I look forward to today's exchange of views and thank the Assembly for its kind attention.

The President: I give the floor to the representative of Brazil, former Chairperson of the Peacebuilding Commission.

Mr. De Aguiar Patriota (Brazil): On behalf of the members of the Peacebuilding Commission, I am pleased to present the report of the Commission on its eighth session (A/69/818). The report reflects the range of policy and country-specific works that the Peacebuilding Commission undertook in 2014, which was a productive year, with several important processes successfully completed and new thematic and partnership horizons explored.

At the outset, I would like to pay tribute to colleagues leading the Commission's country-specific engagements as well as the Working Group on Lessons Learned for their dedication and commitment, and to colleagues representing the countries concerned for their tireless effort to harmonize the perspectives of their respective capitals with those emanating from New York.

I wish to highlight some specific elements from the report that deserve the particular attention of the General Assembly. First, the Commission's work over the past year has once again confirmed that its potential as a platform for leveraging the political weight of its members to consolidate peace should be further utilized. An example of how the Commission can increasingly play to its political strengths was the collective and determined position it took in the early stages of the Ebola outbreak. The Commission helped spur the international community and other parts of the United Nations system to focus on the risk the crisis posed to the peacebuilding gains in the three most affected countries. The terms of reference of the United Nations-led Ebola recovery initiatives have therefore included areas identified by the Commission which deserve special attention in overall recovery strategies and support programmes.

Secondly, the Commission is uniquely placed to promote greater harmony between the subregional, regional and international dimensions of the post-conflict response. Therefore, one of the Commission's key priority areas in the past year was to actively engage its African members and establish deep and dynamic partnerships with Africa's regional and subregional organizations. Our experience from Guinea-Bissau to Burundi and the Central African Republic confirm that greater regional and subregional coherence is a key factor in support of peacebuilding-related efforts. As we continue to integrate the regional and subregional perspectives into the work of the Commission, we will further strengthen the relevance and weight of its country-specific engagement.

Thirdly, in 2014 the Peacebuilding Commission convened its first-ever annual session with a view to exploring where broader intergovernmental policy development is necessary to help countries reduce the risk of conflict. As it continues to explore various avenues for predictable financing for peacebuilding, the Commission's focus on domestic resource mobilization and the fight against illicit financial flows was a critical step towards identifying possible policy areas requiring Member States' individual and collective action. The challenge posed by illicit financial flows and similar systemic gaps in intergovernmental policy related to financing for peacebuilding highlight the interdependence among security, institutional and socioeconomic initiatives in the promotion of peace. The Commission will continue to position itself to

promote greater coherence and synergy of policies and actions across the political, security and developmental dimensions of peace consolidation.

Fourthly, the gender dimension of peacebuilding deserves our continuing attention and unwavering commitment. While women endure the tragic consequences of violent conflicts, they are also key agents for societal transformation in post-conflict societies. The special event that the Commission hosted in collaboration with UN-Women in September 2014 shed light on local peacebuilding initiatives led by women in diverse contexts. This year, the Commission will further explore practical ways to mainstream the gender dimension into its country-specific engagements.

Fifthly, defining and improving the nature and scope of its advisory function to the Security Council and the General Assembly continued to be the Commission's main objective in 2014. The Commission is uniquely positioned to complement the work of these two organs by ensuring that inclusive socioeconomic development contributes to peace and security and reduces the risk of emergence or relapse into violent conflict. The advisory function to both principal organs — the Council and the Assembly — should help to strengthen the integrated and long-term commitment of the United Nations and other international and regional actors to countries emerging from conflict. In this respect, the thematic focus on the transition of United Nations missions reflects the Commission's experience that while a decrease in attention from the Council could be seen as a sign of positive developments in a post-conflict country, the development of sustainable national capacities and resources is a long-term process that requires strong national leadership and sustained support from the international community. The nature and scope of such support is an area to which the convening and policymaking power of the General Assembly can and should contribute.

Sixthly and finally, the section on the conclusions and forward agenda of the report charts the course of action for the Commission in 2015. The forward agenda reflects the Commission's determination to follow-up on key thematic and country-specific approaches that were initiated in 2014, thus ensuring continuity in focus and consistency in approach.

Pursuant to General Assembly resolution 65/7 and Security Council resolution 1947 (2010), the Commission has capitalized on its mandated annual reporting to the General Assembly and the Security Council on progress made in taking forward relevant recommendations from the 2010 review of the peacebuilding architecture and initiated advance preparation for the second five-year review called for by both principal organs to be conducted this year. The purpose of the advance preparation was to foster broader ownership of the review among Member States through inclusive and extensive consultations on the objectives, scope, methodology and modalities for conducting the review. The advance preparation reflects convergence among Member States that the challenges facing the countries emerging from conflict should be central to the 2015 review. It was therefore proposed to ground the review in specific country studies.

A commitment to helping States avoid relapse into violent conflict was the motivation for the creation in 2005 of the Peacebuilding Commission, the Peacebuilding Support Office and the Peacebuilding Fund. Member States agreed that the 2015 review needed to take this original motivation as its point of departure. The terms of reference for the review, initially developed by and consulted within the Commission and subsequently endorsed by the General Assembly and the Security Council, should help identify areas of progress and remaining gaps in international assistance to countries emerging from conflict.

The two-stage design of the review, by which an Advisory Group of experts would undertake country studies and propose actionable and practical recommendations for consideration by the General Assembly and the Security Council, would hopefully ensure that the two principal organs are able to take an informed decision on the future of the broader peacebuilding architecture of the United Nations. This architecture comprises the three components established in 2005, as well as all other relevant United Nations operational entities that contribute to building lasting and sustainable peace through a variety of political and programmatic tools. In this regard, I wish to conclude this presentation by acknowledging the role of the Peacebuilding Support Office, of Assistant Secretary-General Oscar Fernández-Taranco and of his predecessor, Ms. Judy Cheng-Hopkins, and their team, in support of the Commission's work and activities over the past year.

We will continue to count on the Office's support as we seek to pursue the Commission's objectives and on its competent management of the Peacebuilding Fund. Through the work undertaken by the Commission

and the Fund, the synergy and complementarity between the political and programmatic dimensions of peacebuilding would bring greater effectiveness to our investment in the countries concerned.

The path to healing the scars caused by war and to rebuilding the institutions that deliver security, justice, basic services and economic opportunities and protect fundamental rights is long and fraught with enormous challenges. I am convinced that the United Nations efforts in this area should remain people-centred. We must be actively listening to the voices of the people that are most affected by violent conflict. We must be learning from and guided by their experiences and needs. I believe that in 2015, under the stewardship of Sweden and Ambassador Olof Skoog, and with the unwavering commitment of its Member States, the Peacebuilding Commission can be the locus of such a partnership. I also hope that the ongoing review will generate practical recommendations and the requisite political momentum to adapt and orient the Commission to this end.

The President: I now give the floor to the Permanent Representative of Sweden, Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission.

Mr. Skoog (Sweden), Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission: First of all, I would like to congratulate the Permanent Representative of Brazil, Ambassador Antonio de Aguiar Patriota, for his very strong leadership, energy, drive and commitment as Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission last year. Replacing him is indeed a daunting task, but I take pleasure in the fact that he will stay on as Vice-Chair of the Commission as we move forward.

The annual debate on peacebuilding in the General Assembly is particularly important this year. As part of the probably record-high number of very significant United Nations conferences on critical and increasingly complex global challenges during a single year, we must seize the opportunity to discuss how the United Nations can be better equipped to respond to them. This includes better support for countries emerging from conflict and moving towards sustainable peace and development. It also includes, as Antonio de Aguiar Patriota just mentioned, a people-centred approach where we listen to those most affected by conflict.

The Peacebuilding Commission has important and urgent tasks ahead of it: the Ebola recovery, the drawdown of the United Nations Mission in Liberia and its complications and effects, political processes that can and will bring tensions and possible relapses, and a very important socioeconomic development agenda that remains far from accomplished in many countries. But this is also the year where we need to reflect on the creation of the Peacebuilding Commission and look back upon it.

The original motivation for the creation of the Peacebuilding Commission was, as first laid out in the Secretary General's report "In larger freedom: towards development, security and human rights for all" (A/59/2005), was very straightforward — to more effectively address the challenge of helping countries transition from war to lasting peace and to fill an institutional gap in the United Nations system, including by improving strategic planning, helping countries strengthen their national institutions, ensuring predictable and flexible funding, improving coordination of international post-conflict activities, and providing a new diversified intergovernmental forum to ensure greater coherence of support and extend the period of political attention.

Clearly, this remains a work in progress. But the vision remains equally relevant today, and by working together we can take further steps to realize these goals this year. For 2015, we have initially set four main priorities for the Peacebuilding Commission.

Our first priority is the peacebuilding review. An impressive Advisory Group is currently undertaking case studies. We are looking forward to its findings, which will provide important input to the intergovernmental process in the fall. As Chair, we intend to act as conveners and ensure broad participation and buy-in to the review process. To my mind, the review should tie into other reviews going on this year, including on Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) and on peace operations.

Our second priority is peacebuilding in Ebola recovery. As the President said, the three countries most affected by the Ebola disease outbreak — Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea — are all on the agenda of the Peacebuilding Commission. As the epidemiological situation is now improving, and we are hopefully soon down to zero cases, we need to make sure that peacebuilding priorities are addressed in the recovery efforts, including the need to accelerate support for institutional capacity-building. Last week, I undertook a trip to the region and witnessed first hand the importance of integrating peacebuilding into

recovery plans. After this meeting today I will travel to Washington, D.C., to participate in the World Bank spring meeting on Ebola recovery and to make these points.

Our third priority to support for and coordination with regional organizations, not least the African Union. By drawing upon the work initiated by my predecessor last year, we should deepen the dialogue with regional organizations to see how our different comparative advantages can best be drawn upon. We should also look at ways to develop joint strategies as a way to forge closer and mutually reinforcing modes of cooperation.

Our fourth priority is financing for peacebuilding. The proposed theme for the annual session of 2015 is "Predictable financing for peacebuilding — breaking the silos". This session should address, again, one of the founding pillars of the creation of the PBC and in the light of this provide input to the peacebuilding review process. In addition, as a cross-cutting issue, and as mentioned by Ambassador De Aguiar Patriota, we must continue to improve gender equality and women's empowerment in all our efforts. These remain key elements in any sustainable peacebuilding and development exercise.

In closing, we look forward to listening to the debate today, which provides an important opportunity for the wider United Nations membership to reflect on an increasingly significant aspect of the United Nations response to post-conflict challenges.

The President: I give the floor to the observer of the European Union.

Mr. Mayr-Harting (European Union): I have the honour to speak on behalf of the European Union and its member States. The candidate countries the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Albania; the country of the Stabilization and Association Process and potential candidate Bosnia and Herzegovina; as well as the Republic of Moldova and Georgia, align themselves with this statement.

I thank you, Mr. President, for having convened today's important meeting revolving around the annual report (A/69/818) of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) on its eighth session and the report of the Secretary-General on the Peacebuilding Fund (A/69/745). This represents a good occasion to take stock of the achievements made over the past 12 months, draw some lessons and apply them to the future.

The European Union is engaged in peacebuilding activities in many countries through our broad and long-term engagement in political dialogue, development, economic cooperation, trade and other instruments. This is why the European Union has fully participated in the PBC's work since its establishment. The European Union has also been a full member of all country-specific configurations of the PBC since their inception and is trying to provide the best support possible for their success.

The year 2015 will be an important one for the PBC, with the comprehensive 10-year review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture. We see this year's review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture as an opportunity to enhance its effectiveness and impact in countries that emerge from conflict, on the basis of past experiences and lessons learned. We look forward to actively participating in the review process, both in the current phase with the Advisory Group of experts and after 30 June, during informal consultations on the basis of the experts' report.

The two annual reports before us today are both comprehensive documents, illustrating the complexity of peacebuilding challenges. We appreciate the efforts of the Organizational Committee and the Peacebuilding Support Office to provide an assessment of the PBC's work in pursuing its forward agenda for 2014. The European Union applauds the successful organization of the first-ever PBC annual session, on 23 June 2014, on the theme of sustainable support for peacebuilding. In addition, the advance preparations of the 2015 review have been very well conducted by the Chair of the Organizational Committee.

The European Union welcomes the terms of reference for the 2015 peacebuilding review, which allow for a broad approach beyond the United Nations peacebuilding architecture. At the same time, the review should take a hard look at the vision and principles behind the establishment of the peacebuilding architecture in 2005. This approach should allow for an honest assessment of this architecture within the United Nations system and beyond.

On substance, the European Union believes that the peacebuilding review should be linked to all other ongoing review processes in order to ensure coherence in the United Nations actions. As for global peacebuilding trends, the discussion should be linked to broader policy developments, including processes and instruments of mutual commitment and accountability,

such as the "new deal". It is important to choose the right format for a particular peacebuilding context and avoid duplication.

Peacebuilding was conceived of well before the creation of the peacebuilding architecture to address the gap between security and development in fragile post-conflict countries. A basic premise is that peacebuilding should be done at the country level, and that there is no one-size-fits-all approach. To be truly effective in its response in fragile States, the United Nations system needs to work in a more integrated, flexible and coordinated fashion, at both the country and Headquarters levels, and give more weight to prevention and early-warning tools.

Peacebuilding should be done on the basis of a long-term vision and a holistic approach. It should focus on the structural causes of conflict; provide for inclusive and participatory political processes; build strong and effective institutions capable of addressing the root causes of conflict and responsive to people's needs; promote national ownership, both from Government and the civil society; and a "bottom-up" approach.

There is a clear role for the PBC when it engages with countries that are undergoing a transition period. The PBC needs to be able to respond better to challenges identified by Special Representatives of the Secretary-General, resident coordinators and other actors. In so doing, it could significantly contribute to the One United Nations initiative.

The PBC's greatest comparative advantage is its convening power — the ability to call to task a large number of Member States and help reconcile their approaches. However, its ability to deliver this political added value is hampered by a number of factors. Some country-specific configurations of the PBC have taken a more flexible and politically attuned approach, and lessons should be learned from these experiences. The peacebuilding review should explore ways to maximize the potential and added value of the PBC's unique composition, assembling all relevant actors around the same table. Another one of PBC's comparative advantages relates to its capacity to maintain sustained attention on peacebuilding processes. The PBC can also play a valuable advisory role in support of the Security Council.

Turning to the performance of the country-specific configurations over the past year, there is some good progress to report, while many challenges remain to be tackled. We commend the efforts of all configuration Chairs. In our view, the PBC still has a role to play in all these countries, perhaps through more flexible forms of engagement, which will be discussed during the review. Other country or regional situations could also be addressed through such flexible group-of-friends formats with a clear link to the field.

The European Union commends the efforts of the Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea configurations in dealing with the peacebuilding aspects of the Ebola crisis. The continued accompaniment of Burundi in the run-up to this year's elections, in particular after the closure of the United Nations Office in Burundi, is an excellent example of how the PBC can play a politically attuned role. The PBC's engagement in Guinea-Bissau following the successful elections and return to constitutional order in 2014 has also been very useful, including in the run-up to the successful donor's conference held in Brussels on 25 March 2015.

The Central African Republic arguably presents the biggest challenge of all agenda countries, and its needs, coming out of a major crisis, go well beyond the mandate of the PBC. Being one of the case studies of the peacebuilding review, it presents a troubling example of relapse from which lessons should be drawn. In the short term, the Central African Republic configuration could focus on supporting the electoral process, which faces a significant budget gap. Organizing a well-prepared outreach meeting in New York in this regard, preceded by démarches to potential contributors, would in our view be very helpful. So far, the European Union is almost the only contributor to the electoral budget, and failing to fill the gap could delay the end of the transition.

Before concluding, I would like to extend my gratitude to the former Chair of the PBC, Ambassador Antonio de Aguiar Patriota, whom I would like to thank for his commitment and the excellent work he has done. We also look forward to working hand in hand with the new Chair, Ambassador Olof Skoog, the PBC membership and the Peacebuilding Support Office to move things forward. We welcome the intention of the new Chair to ensure that the activities of the Organizational Committee are supporting the country-specific work of the PBC as much as possible.

The European Union stands ready to continue to support the efforts of the United Nations in all peacebuilding activities.

Mr. Yoshikawa (Japan): I would first like to congratulate Ambassador Olof Skoog, the new Permanent Representative of Sweden, on assuming the chairmanship of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) for 2015. I pledge my delegation's full support to the new Chair. I would also like to express my sincere gratitude to Ambassador Antonio de Aguiar Patriota, former Chair of the PBC, for his strong leadership over the past year. His comprehensive report (A/69/818), which we have just heard presented, clearly shows that the year 2014 was a very productive year for the Peacebuilding Commission.

As described in the PBC's report, the Commission successfully held its first annual session in June and engaged in productive discussions on the scope, terms of reference and modalities for the peacebuilding architecture review.

I would like to focus my statement on the activities of the Working Group on Lessons Learned, which I had the pleasure and honour to chair in 2014. We held extensive discussions on challenges associated with the transition of United Nations missions. In those discussions, we identified two major challenges in the transition process: first, funding and technical-capacity gaps for peacebuilding priorities; and secondly, sustaining inclusive political processes. We found that the PBC can contribute to creating an environment conducive to a successful and smooth transition in its agenda countries, including through its advisory function to the Governments concerned, to the Security Council and other relevant stakeholders. With the support of PBC members, the Peacebuilding Support Office and the wider United Nations system, we compiled a report summarizing those discussions and submitted it to the Chair of the PBC in December. We hope the findings of the report will be fully made use of in the ongoing reviews of the peacebuilding architecture and of United Nations peace operations.

In 2015, under my chairmanship, the Working Group on Lessons Learned will focus on the theme of institution-building, with special attention on extensions of State authority and political institution rebuilding in post-conflict countries. We believe that the rebuilding of judicial and security institutions and the normalization of political processes via elections and reconciliation are critical parts of peacebuilding efforts. As we did in 2014, we will summarize our discussion in a Working Group report and submit it to the PBC Chair by the end of the year. We hope that the 2015 Working Group activities will benefit the two review processes of the peacebuilding architecture and peace operations.

These thematic discussions can advance global policy development relevant to countries emerging from conflict. We believe that the Working Group on Lessons Learned can and should play this important normative role as a broad-based membership forum for policy discussion. However, the Working Group has continued to exist merely as an informal group within the PBC's Organizational Committee. In this regard, we suggest that Member States initiate a discussion on the status of the Working Group with a view to formally institutionalizing it as a result of the peacebuilding architecture review.

Finally, allow me to refer to the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF). The PBF has proved itself to be an important financing tool to support critical elements of peacebuilding processes in many countries. Japan appreciates the Fund's active performance based on a new business plan for 2014-2016. This includes expanding the use of the Immediate Response Facility, piloting new cross-border programmes and launching the second Gender Promotion Initiative. In order to implement these programmes more effectively, the PBF will need to ensure national ownership and strengthen partnership with other donors. We expect that the PBF will continue to play an important role as a global fund, not only in Africa, but also in other parts of the world, in particular Asia. As a major donor to the PBF, Japan will continue to support the Fund.

In closing, I would like to reiterate Japan's continued commitment to further progress of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture as a member of the PBC Organizational Committee, as Chair of the Working Group on Lessons Learned and as a major donor to the PBF.

Mr. Anshor (Indonesia): My delegation wishes to thank Ambassador Olof Skoog, Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), for his comprehensive statement. Allow me also to commend the hard work and commitment of the previous Chair, Ambassador Antonio de Aguiar Patriota, who is also the new vice-Chair, along with all the Chairpersons of the six country-specific configurations and the Working Group on Lessons Learned.

My delegation would like to express its deep appreciation to Assistant Secretary-General Oscar

Fernández-Taranco, Head of the Peacebuilding Support Office, along with his entire able team, for their hard work and strong commitment in supporting the mandate of the PBC and administering the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF).

Indonesia welcomes the PBC report on its eighth session (A/69/818), which outlines the PBC's various policies and active work undertaken in 2014. Indeed, many PBC activities in 2014 strengthened the important role of the Commission as an intergovernmental advisory body bringing together all relevant actors to marshal resources and advise on strategies for post-conflict peacebuilding and recovery, in addition to the other main purposes of the PBC. We are pleased to note that the report comprehensively covers various elements from the 2014 forward agenda and the Commission's pertinent work in 2015, along with possible future actions. In this context, Indonesia would like to share some of its positions.

First, since its establishment, the Peacebuilding Commission has played an important role in garnering international attention to post-conflict peacebuilding and assisting efforts towards a more coherent effort among the relevant United Nations and non-United Nations peacebuilding actors. Obviously, more needs to be done. We are of the view that the Commission must be further strengthened so that its advisory, advocacy and resource-mobilization roles can be fully utilized, in particular for countries on its agenda, while bearing in mind the importance of nationally owned peacebuilding priorities. Moreover, the relationship between the PBC and the Security Council must be improved. The interactions between both bodies should remain mutually proactive at the ambassadorial and expert levels. The ideas and recommendations coming from the PBC should be seriously taken into consideration by the Council. Therefore, regular informal dialogue and consultations are necessary in developing trust and confidence between the two bodies.

Second, the first annual session, held in June 2014, has indeed generated an important opportunity for all relevant stakeholders, including PBC agenda countries, supporting countries, United Nations system agencies, regional entities and private-sector representatives, to enhance coordination and discuss further policy development. The annual session demonstrates that effective peacebuilding has to be a comprehensive, collaborative and well-supported process. And again it goes without saying that results have impact when peacebuilding is fully owned and sustained. In that context, Indonesia supports the PBC's increased attention and innovative approach to reinforcing its commitment to the promotion of national ownership by placing greater emphasis on countries' capacity-building.

We are pleased and honoured to be involved in the whole process of the annual session, including facilitating its modalities and actively participating in both working sessions. The unique dialogue, conducted by relevant actors from New York and from the field as well as the capitals, requires follow-up action and cooperation. In that regard, it is important, as the report of the Commission states, for the follow-up to the first annual session to lead into the second, in order to ensure continuity of the policy discussion and to help further identify the necessary development with the relevant actors. Indonesia strongly believes the annual session will help us to further explore the Commission's challenges and options as well as enhance its impact.

Thirdly, we support the agenda of the PBC where it aims, going forward, to further strengthen its country-specific and policy-related engagements, including preparing for the second annual session, integrating the perspectives of regional actors, sustaining attention to the long-term effects of the Ebola outbreak and improving its own working methods.

Fourthly, with regard to the 2015 review of the peacebuilding architecture, it is imperative that its recommendations be fully implemented. It is therefore also critical to ensure strong ownership and full participation on the part of Member States and the United Nations system throughout the entire process. We believe that the work of the Advisory Group of Experts, in close consultation with Member States and the relevant actors, will provide important input on creating a more effective United Nations peacebuilding architecture.

Concerning the financing of peacebuilding activities, Indonesia believes that the Secretary-General, with the support of Member States, should establish more rational and predictable funding arrangements for United Nations peacebuilding efforts. That would not necessarily require more funding, but rather fewer bureaucratic processes within the United Nations, in order to avoid any funding arrangements that are counterproductive. In that regard, we are pleased to note the improved performance of the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF), in particular with its 2014-2016 business

plan, which added various innovative strategies relating to national plans and ownership. The PBF, as the Chair of the PBF Advisory Group reports, has indeed proved to be a unique instrument with a strong track record on providing flexible and timely support in addressing key peacebuilding issues.

In conclusion, we wish to emphasize that a strong partnership and coherence between the Peacebuilding Fund, the Commission and other relevant United Nations entities in New York and the field are very much needed. A robust and coherent partnership among the stakeholders, including the relevant regional and subregional organizations, will help societies to develop a safer and more just and prosperous future. For its part, Indonesia will continue its active engagement with the overall United Nations peacebuilding agenda.

Mr. Mukerji (India): We would like to thank the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) for its report on its eighth session (A/69/818), and the Secretary-General for his report (A/69/745) on the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF). The PBC's report provides a useful overview of the Commission's work during its eighth session. The Commission deserves special mention for its work dealing with the tragic outbreak of Ebola in three countries on its agenda — Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone — and for drawing international attention to the need to ensure that the outbreak would not create a long-term threat to the progress achieved in those countries in their efforts to achieve sustainable peace and inclusive development.

We would like to take this opportunity to reiterate some of the important principles that should guide peacebuilding, which will help us assess the work done by the Peacebuilding Commission during its eighth session and also provide direction for the Commission's ongoing work during its ninth session.

The international community's willingness to provide adequate resources is a necessary condition for successful peacebuilding efforts in post-conflict countries. In that context, the theme of the second annual session, "Predictable financing for peacebuilding: breaking the silos", is timely and relevant. We believe that peacebuilding, anchored firmly in the overall peace process, can deliver results if the international community makes available predictable and appropriate levels of resources over extended periods. It is important that advocacy be accompanied by matching commitments in resources.

Secondly, it is imperative to ensure that peacebuilding efforts are aligned with national priorities and that all plans and programmes are implemented under national leadership and through national institutions. This can ensure that gains, even if they are slow, are sustainable. It is essential to rebuild institutions and infrastructure in nations torn by civil war if we want to consolidate peace and avoid relapses into conflict. A certain amount of external guidance is implicit in peacebuilding, but it should not come at the cost of local ownership and agendas. It is the primary responsibility of the national Governments of countries emerging from conflict to identify priorities and strategies for peacebuilding in order to ensure national ownership.

Thirdly, the United Nations must go beyond short-term fixes and address host countries' long-term socioeconomic development issues. Poverty and a lack of opportunity pose some of the most formidable barriers to sustainable peace.

Fourthly, it is important to establish and maintain public order. A security vacuum after a peace agreement is dangerous, since it can very quickly lead to criminal activity. The focus, however, should be on what is doable. Given a scarcity of resources, the priorities should be ensuring impartiality in recruitment and vetting and training new recruits, rather than seeking to make cultural change a central aspect of police reform.

Fifthly, the rule of law is also important, since peace cannot be consolidated unless people are confident that their grievances will be justly redressed. Peacebuilding must integrate indigenous and informal justice mechanisms into judicial reforms rather than viewing them as incompatible with western liberal values.

Sixthly, paragraph 43 of the PBC report refers to Member States' support for ensuring synergy between this year's review of the peacebuilding architecture and the Secretary-General's review of peace operations. We think that both review processes should examine the contributions that peacekeepers and peacekeeping missions make to early peacebuilding, including by creating a conducive environment and suggesting ways to further consolidate those early gains. At the same time, it is also important to recognize that humanitarian and development actors and other peacebuilders and peacekeepers all have different tasks and priorities. Peacekeeping and peacebuilding should therefore be integrated only to the extent that is required to build sustainable peace.

Lastly, in keeping with peacebuilding's importance, we should aim to submit the 2015 review of the peacebuilding architecture to our leaders for their guidance during the seventieth anniversary session of the United Nations. We would like to underline that peacebuilding is an area to which we attach importance and to assure you, Sir, of our delegation's constructive support and participation in the work of the PBC under the dynamic chairship of our new colleague from Sweden.

Mr. Dunn (United States of America): The delegation of the United States would like to commend the tremendous work of the outgoing Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission's Organizational Committee, Ambassador Antonio de Aguiar Patriota, and his staff at the Brazilian mission. Ambassador Patriota was instrumental in supporting post-conflict peacebuilding in a variety of countries. My delegation is grateful for his invaluable work during the Commission's eighth session in 2014, and we congratulate and look forward to working with the new Chair, Ambassador Olof Skoog of Sweden, who is already off to an impressive start.

It is widely understood that preventing relapses into conflict, based on the Commission's goals of coherence, resource mobilization and advocacy, requires the coordinated and sustained commitment of national, regional and international actors, including civil society and women. We have seen much progress in preventing conflict and building the conditions for lasting peace, as detailed in the Secretary-General's report on the Peacebuilding Commission (A/69/818) on its eighth session and in his report on the Peacebuilding Fund (A/69/745). I would like to highlight some salient examples of that progress.

The tragic outbreak of the Ebola virus in Sierra Leone, Liberia and Guinea — all countries on the Commission's agenda — was a critical event that required immediate attention and flexibility from the Commission. Indeed, the Commission played an important supporting role in bringing together all the relevant actors to fight the disease. My delegation remains impressed by the determination of the leadership in 2014 — of Ambassador Guillermo Rishchynski, Chair of the Sierra Leone country configuration; our dear departed colleague Ambassador Martin Grunditz of Sweden, Chair of the Liberia country configuration; and Ambassador Sylvie Lucas of Luxembourg, Chair of the Guinea country configuration — and thanks them for their tireless efforts to ensure that the Ebola virus does not roll back peacebuilding gains in those countries. My delegation encourages similar determination and focus as we move beyond the immediate health emergency to the Ebola virus' longer-term socioeconomic impacts.

Thanks also go to Ambassador Paul Seger of Switzerland as Chair of the Burundi country configuration, which played an active role in the drawdown of the United Nations Office there. The transition to an electoral observation mission in Burundi was a smooth one. The configuration's leadership towards a successful and inclusive round table to discuss the transition is evidence of the Commission's efforts to forge coherence for keeping Burundi on track. The Burundi configuration is continuing its work purposefully, with the overriding aim of helping to ensure peaceful elections later this year.

In the Central African Republic, everyone witnessed the tragic persistence of violence and insecurity over the past year, despite fragile security gains. Thanks to the leadership of Ambassador Omar Hilale of Morocco, Chair of the Central African Republic country-specific configuration, the Commission stayed on top of the unfolding situation and helped focus and sustain attention on the plight of the Central African Republic. As the United Nations installed a multidimensional peacekeeping mission in the country, the Commission convened the international community, financial institutions, civil society and the leadership of the Central African Republic to assess needs and determine actions. The Commission acted quickly to help restore core public functions by mobilizing resources, thereby restoring confidence in the institutions of the Central African Republic.

The Guinea-Bissau country configuration, chaired by Ambassador Antonio de Aguiar Patriota of Brazil, provided a forum for the new Government to present its development priorities to the international community. Thanks are due for that effort, which usefully informed the international donors conference for Guinea-Bissau that took place on 25 March. Nearly $1.5 billion in pledges were made at that conference. Also, the configuration provided support to the Government that served to strengthen its ability to generate domestic resources.

As is widely known, consolidating peace depends on regional neighbours and cross-border dynamics. The United States delegation commends the Commission's special emphasis on engaging regional actors in fragile

settings, particularly the neighbours of those countries on the Commission's agenda.

The United States delegation is convinced that promoting social inclusiveness requires the inclusion of women's voices in peacebuilding. My delegation looks forward to the Commission's efforts to incorporate more gender perspectives into its considerations and activities.

With regard to the financing of peacebuilding activities, the Peacebuilding Fund had an impressive year in 2014: there was $99.4 million in funding to 16 countries, while donors pledged $78.2 million. The Fund has proved to be a flexible tool that can be used to address the rapid needs of countries in crisis. Seventy-nine per cent of the Fund's projects this year are on track and are expected to deliver results. That is notable given the catastrophic impact that Ebola has had on three of the Funds' key investment countries. The United States delegation agrees that this is a remarkable achievement. The United States is also proud to have made its first contribution to the Fund for 2015.

The year 2015 is a significant one for United Nations peacebuilding, as the international community's understanding is increasing with regard to the need to pay close attention to the key components of lasting peace in post-conflict countries — namely, national ownership, social and political inclusiveness, institution-building and predictable financing. Stakeholders should make the most of the five-year review of United Nations peacebuilding architecture already under way. My delegation commends the experts who prepared the review's methodology, including country-specific studies anchored in addressing the challenges facing post-conflict countries in order to diminish the possibility of relapse. Once the Panel of experts has formally provided its report, my delegation will participate robustly in considering its recommendations — a process to be undertaken jointly by the General Assembly and the Security Council later this year.

Finally, the United States delegation looks forward to the Peacebuilding Commission's second annual session, to begin on 23 June, on International Peacebuilding Day, to consider the topic of more predictable financing for peacebuilding.

Mr. Hilale (Morocco) (*spoke in French*): I would first like to commend Ambassador Antonio de Aguiar Patriota, Permanent Representative of Brazil, for his statement, and in particular for his energetic commitment and decisive leadership throughout 2014, during which he ensured the success of the chairmanship of the Peacebuilding Commission. I also take this opportunity to reiterate my congratulations to Ambassador Olof Skoog, Permanent Representative of Sweden, and to assure him of my delegation's support for the success of his chairmanship throughout 2015, which is particularly important for the future of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture.

The Kingdom of Morocco welcomes the presentation of the annual report on the Peacebuilding Commission (A/69/818) and would like to share with the Assembly the following comments on a number of issues that we deem essential.

An example that was mentioned many times this morning is that of the recent Ebola crisis and the outstanding way in which the Commission mobilized from the beginning of the crisis in order to keep it at the top of the list of the international community's concerns and to safeguard, as much as possible, the gains made for peacebuilding consolidation in recent years in the three brotherly countries affected by the epidemic. In that regard, my country had the privilege to be associated in the momentum of international solidarity by contributing political, financial and moral support to Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia. The recent visit by the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission, our colleague from Sweden, to the three countries affected clearly reflects the continued commitment of the Peacebuilding Commission. That mobilization illustrates the scope of the Commission's capacity; it should enable us to learn lessons for the future.

With regard to the situation in the Central African Republic — and I have the honour to chair the country-specific configuration — we face a challenging situation. As the Assembly is aware, the country has been on the Commission's agenda since 2008, and relapsed into conflict in 2013. Fortunately, the situation is improving significantly day by day, and the country is beginning to recover slowly thanks to the joint efforts of the international community. The preparations for the Bangui Forum are well under way. I am pleased to announce that I personally will go to Bangui for the event in order to reiterate the support of the Commission for the ongoing efforts to re-establish peace and stability in the Central African Republic. Nevertheless, translating those efforts into tangible dividends for the Central African Republic's population

requires the steady commitment and support of the international community, especially in this critical phase of its transition.

Just yesterday, the Special Representative of the Secretary-General in the Central African Republic, Mr. Babacar Gaye, reiterated his thanks for the support of the Commission, while recalling the need to remain vigilant and to maintain the attention and support of the international community. The case of the Central African Republic demonstrates the full complexity of the situations that the Commission needs to face.

The Peacebuilding Fund plays a major role in supporting the priority peacebuilding needs in the Central African Republic, as well as in many other countries that are not on the Commission's agenda. My country has been contributing to the Fund for several years. We hope soon to be able to increase our contribution to this essential tool of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture.

Since the beginning of the crisis, the Fund has been involved in the Central African Republic by underwriting the rehabilitation of the main police and gendarmerie stations in Bangui and the payment of their staffs' salaries. That commitment has been expanded since then and, in close collaboration with the World Bank and the United Nations Development Programme, currently covers other critical aspects, such as the restoration of State authority and the rebuilding of its institutions as well as national reconciliation, to name just two examples.

To return to the Commission's activities during the past year, we welcome the emphasis that has been given to strengthening the regional dimension of peacebuilding. As a reminder, Morocco has always supported strengthening this dimension, which is clearly reflected in the presidential statement adopted under the Moroccan presidency of the Security Council in December 2012 (S/PRST/2012/29). Since then, substantial progress has been made in this area — first, at the Commission level, with the organization of the first meeting, in Addis Ababa, between the Chair of the Commission and the Chairs of the Burundi and Central African Republic country-specific configurations and various African institutions, includuing the African Union, the Economic Commission for Africa and the African Development Bank. We welcome and encourage such interaction and hope it can be strengthened. In that regard, I would like to congratulate Egypt for organizing a workshop in Cairo on regional aspects of peacebuilding. I also encourage that type of initiative.

This essential cooperation is also available at the level of country configurations with the Economic Community of West African States, the Mano River Union and the East African Community. We also intend to strengthen cooperation between the Central African Republic country-specific configuration and the Economic Community of Central African States, which is a major player in the Central African crisis.

In general, this cooperation is absolutely necessary for the development of a coherent approach, which is central to the mandate of the Commission. We should continue that effort at coherence and encourage the development of such cooperation and synergy with regional financial institutions, such as the African Development Bank and other financial institutions, which should be able to get more involved in financing peacebuilding priorities.

With respect to the annual meeting, we welcome the efforts of the Chair of the Commission as well as the subject matter selected, continuing the previous session by focusing on the major challenges we face, namely, predictability in funding peacebuilding activities.

With regard to the review of the peacebuilding architecture, we would like to express our full satisfaction with the way the previous Chair of the Commission, Mr. Antonio de Aguiar Patriota, led the process of consultations that allowed Member States to take ownership of the process. We also welcome the fact that the Central African Republic was selected as one of the cases that will be studied. Finally, we hope to continue our cooperation with the Advisory Group and share our respective views on a number of important topics, such as the flexibility of the structure and its ability to adapt to new challenges.

I could not end my speech without congratulating the Chairs of the Peacebuilding Commission country-specific configurations for their daily commitment and for the advice and support they have offered me since I had the pleasure of assuming the functions of Chair of the Central African Republic configuration. My sincere thanks also go to Assistant Secretary-General Oscar Fernández-Taranco and the entire team of the Peacebuilding Support Office, who, despite limited resources, selflessly perform their tasks.

Mr. Grant (Canada): Canada extends its profound thanks and appreciation to Ambassador De Aguiar

Patriota for his tireless efforts and leadership as Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC). At the same time, Canada welcomes Ambassador Skoog and looks forward to working closely with him as Chair.

The annual reports of the Peacebuilding Commission and Peacebuilding Fund (A/69/818 and A/69/745, respectively) present us with an opportunity not only to reflect upon the past year's activities but, more important, to look ahead to the future. This is particularly timely given the current review processes concerning the United Nations peacebuilding architecture, peace operations and resolution 1325 (2000). Those are not exercises in looking in a rear-view mirror; they are opportunities to refine concepts, improve implementation and engage with new and existing partners on innovative approaches.

The confluence of those three reviews present a unique opportunity to draw lessons from years of experience and to reflect the growing global consensus that peace, stability and development are inextricably linked. United Nations peacebuilding concepts and activities need to be aligned to, and supportive of, this understanding in order that we may move the peace and security agenda forward in a definitive manner.

Peacebuilding will always be an endeavour beset by challenges and obstacles. As such, an honest and critical review process is needed if it is to have the potential to improve the way the PBC functions and to enhance its credibility within the United Nations system. Conversely, a pro forma review would be a lost opportunity and a significant blow to the PBC's credibility.

Member States and United Nations agencies need to be actively engaged and supportive of a process that recognizes that peacebuilding may involve high risks, tough political choices and fundamental changes to societies and economies. Addressing those challenges will strengthen the credibility of the review and its findings. We therefore hope that the 2015 review of the peacebuilding architecture will truly be both deep and wide.

To be truly effective, the review cannot shy away from examining the original rationale and assumptions underpinning the peacebuilding architecture, its impact to date and its evolving role within a much-changed policy and institutional context. It should be informed not only by reviews of the peacebuilding operations and resolution 1325 (2000), but also by, for instance, the broad women and peace and security agenda, the New Deal for Engagement in Fragile States and the discussions around the post-2015 development agenda. Finally, it will be crucially important that the General Assembly adopt the recommendations of the panel later this year.

(*spoke in French*)

Twenty years after the Beijing Conference, none of us needs to be reminded of the importance of ensuring that the gender perspective is at the heart of our peacebuilding efforts. The New Deal's peacebuilding and State-building goals point us towards fundamental objectives that are relevant whether or not a State subscribes to the process. Furthermore, the universal nature of the agenda is an important transformative element of the post-2015 development agenda and its sustainable development goals. That is important for two reasons. First, it explicitly recognizes the interconnectedness of our world, and that recognition serves as a reminder that cooperation and compromise are more productive than confrontation and discord. Secondly, it is a recognition that all Member States can potentially be subject to shocks and setbacks.

In that regard, as Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission's Sierra Leone country-specific configuration, I would draw the Assembly's attention to the terrible impact that Ebola has had on peacebuilding and development in the country and its neighbours. For peace to be durable, it must be robust; and for peace to be robust, it must be fostered and supported through both the unexpected shocks and the sometimes predictable setbacks.

That brings me back to the importance of using these reports and the ongoing parallel processes to look ahead to address the challenges of peacebuilding. The work done by the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Fund is an important element of the United Nations efforts to promote international peace and security. They are vital, but they cannot be viewed in isolation.

Mr. Sahebzada Khan (Pakistan): We commend Ambassador Patriota of Brazil, former Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), and Ambassador Skoog of Sweden, the current Chair, for their statements and contribution to the work of the Commission. We would also like to put on record our deepest appreciation for the dedicated support to our work provided by the Peacebuilding Support Office.

Ms. Rambally (Saint Lucia), Vice-President, took the Chair.

The annual report (A/69/818) before us provides a useful overview of the work of the Peacebuilding Commission during its eighth session. It also recommends an actionable agenda going forward. Pakistan welcomes the report's focus on the three key functions — advocacy and sustaining attention, resource mobilization and forging coherence.

Peacebuilding is an enabler of sustainable peace and development in conflict and post-conflict situations. Consequently, the rationale for the Peacebuilding Commission remains valid and strong. The question is whether we have exploited the full potential of that unique body. One of the primary purposes of undertaking activities related to peacebuilding is producing tangible results on the ground. Improvement in the lives of ordinary people affected by conflict is a time-tested yardstick that we can and do use to evaluate that important work.

Pakistan has seen the results of the work undertaken by the Peacebuilding Commission first-hand, both as a member of the Commission and as one of the top troop contributors to some of the countries where much of the work takes place. Based on our experience, we can safely say that strengthening the peacebuilding architecture and advancing the peacebuilding agenda are not only important but imperative. Peacebuilding, we believe, works best as a continuum from conflict prevention to peacekeeping to post-conflict management. Peacekeepers, as early peacebuilders, help lay the foundations of durable peace. Today, the bulk of peacekeeping resources is deployed in multidimensional missions. Security Council resolution 2086 (2013), adopted during Pakistan's presidency of the Security Council in January 2013, was a landmark in that regard: it reinforced strategic attention to peacekeeping and peacebuilding.

The review of the peacebuilding architecture, to which we have all collectively contributed and continue to engage in, should produce recommendations to further improve our work in three key functions: advocacy and sustaining attention, resource mobilization and forging coherence. That work, guided by direct feedback from countries on the agenda of the Commission, would in essence be based on lessons learned. A major advantage of the Peacebuilding Commission is its ability to directly engage with the countries concerned in all stages of its work. It works on the basis of national ownership and a committed international partnership. Those principles would stand us in good stead throughout the review.

We appreciate the Commission's work in the aftermath of the Ebola outbreak in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. It was marked by flexibility and adaptability. The Commission was able to quickly focus on the urgent demands of the situation. With the improvement of the situation in those countries, we hope that the Commission will be able to revert to its core functions.

The report of the Secretary-General on the Peacebuilding Fund (A/69/745) notes that the Fund achieved its target in 2014. It also focuses on strategies to better tap into internal funding mechanisms. We look forward to further development of those strategies. The importance being given to resource mobilization during the upcoming annual session of the PBC, with focused discussions on the theme "Predictable financing for peacebuilding — breaking the silos", is a timely and welcome action.

Lastly, the Peacebuilding Commission has made significant progress over the years. However, considerable challenges remain. Recent setbacks in some African countries have shown that the risk of relapse still remains very real and that more needs to be done to address the root causes. We should therefore continue to work towards avoiding that eventuality.

Mrs. Pucarinho (Portugal): I thank the President for convening this meeting on the annual report (A/69/818) of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) and the Secretary-General's report on the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) (A/69/745). This debate is particularly important in the context of the ongoing comprehensive 10-year review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture. In that regard, I would like to stress the support of Portugal for the ongoing work of the Panel led by President José Ramos-Horta, to whom we extend our full cooperation.

Portugal's statement is fully aligned with that made earlier today by the observer of the European Union. I would like to add comments in my national capacity.

At the outset, I would like to warmly congratulate Ambassador Olof Skoog of Sweden for having assumed the chairmanship of the PBC. Portugal fully supports the priorities he has set out for the PBC. I would also like to thank Ambassador Antonio de Aguiar Patriota of Brazil for his excellent work and very able leadership of

the PBC during the past year. His performance greatly contributed to the increased visibility of the PBC.

I will focus my comments on three specific points — the PBC role within the United Nations system, the usefulness of the Peacebuilding Fund and the concrete case in which the Commission and the Fund are actually contributing to achieving positive results, that of Guinea-Bissau.

On the PBC role within the United Nations system, I would like to stress the relevance of the PBC as a forum that brings together the efforts of interested parties to consolidate peace through advocacy, resource mobilization and partnerships, and forging coherence. The past year's annual session provided an opportunity to discuss concrete steps on how to build sustainable systems for resource mobilization. While building on that, discussions on predictable financing this year will go further on a key issue that remains a challenge and merits attention in the PBC review process.

Portugal is of the view that the PBC will increasingly seek interaction and cooperation with regional partners, major institutional donors and international financial institutions. We will strongly welcome the strengthening of the advisory role of the PBC to the Security Council. The Commission indeed has comprehensive knowledge and understanding of security and development dimensions that would enrich the briefings to the Council.

I would also like to emphasize the growing usefulness of the Peacebuilding Fund and its proven flexibility to redirect its response to where it is most needed. That was the case when it came to addressing the Ebola crisis. The decision to reprogramme existing funding to indirectly assist efforts in the Republic of Guinea and Sierra Leone proved that the funds could be flexible. Quite rightly, direct involvement in combating Ebola was the priority of the Fund. However, the Fund will play a critical role in supporting the recovery of the three countries most affected.

Finally, I wish to share some thoughts on Guinea-Bissau, a country whose progress provides good evidence of the usefulness of both the PBC and the PBF. The PBC's country-specific configuration on Guinea-Bissau contributed to the restoration of constitutional order in that country. In coordination with other international actors, it played an important role in the process, both before and after the April and May 2014 elections, by keeping Guinea-Bissau high on the international agenda and by promoting greater coordination among all nine international partners present on the ground — notably, the Economic Community of Western African States, the Community of Portuguese-speaking Countries, the African Union, the European Union and the United Nations.

In that regard, Portugal welcomes the continued support of the Chair of the Guinea-Bissau configuration to the country's authorities following the international donors conference held in Brussels last March. Portugal will remain highly engaged in and committed to the work of that specific configuration. In coordination with the other international partners involved, it will support the implementation of the reforms presented by the Guinea-Bissau authorities at the donors conference, including on security sector reform, institutional consolidation and the promotion of the rule of law, notably through the fight against impunity. All those priorities are well aligned with the views of the PBC.

The Peacebuilding Fund has consistently supported Guinea-Bissau. Since September 2013, it has committed $4.8 million to the country, which was particularly important in supporting elections, a very crucial step in the process of restoring constitutional order. The PBF renewed its commitment to Guinea-Bissau at the recent donors conference. We very much look forward to its new priority plan.

Ms. Lucas (Luxembourg) (*spoke in French*): Allow me at the outset to thank Ambassador Antonio de Aguiar Patriota, Permanent Representative of Brazil and outgoing Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission (PCB), for his commitment throughout 2014. I wish Ambassador Olof Skoog, Permanent Representative of Sweden, every success as Chair of the Commission in 2015. I assure him of my country's full cooperation.

Luxembourg aligns itself with the statement made earlier by the observer of the European Union.

The year 2015 will be an important one for the overall architecture of peacebuilding, even as it undergoes a new review. We await with interest the conclusions and recommendations of the Advisory Group of Experts chaired by Ambassador Gert Rosenthal. Echoing earlier speakers, I would like to reiterate the importance of generating synergy among the three current review processes, including the review of peacekeeping operations, that of the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000), as well as the high-level groups of experts tasked with the various reviews. It is

important to bring to light the close links that do and should exist among the different actors and entities of the United Nations system.

We hope that the 2015 review will produce ideas that will make it possible to strengthen the functions and effectiveness of the Peacebuilding Commission so that it can fulfil its full potential to support countries emerging from conflict and strengthen its advisory role with regard to the General Assembly and the Security Council. As the Peacebuilding Commission's report (A/69/818) on its work makes clear, one of the areas in which the Commission can supply invaluable assistance pertains to the transitions of United Nations missions — for example by filling eventual gaps in support for political dialogue. National reconciliation and the fight against impunity are also processes that require long-term support.

Women's full participation is essential if we wish to build lasting peace. Special attention must also be paid to vulnerable and marginalized groups, such as ethnic and religious minorities. Peacebuilding demands the involvement of society as a whole.

Examples of relapse into conflict such as we have seen in the Central African Republic and South Sudan show that significant efforts remain to be made in the area of peacebuilding. Whenever human rights violations, exclusionary or marginalizing dynamics or a narrowing of the political space threaten progress, vigilance and action must be the order of the day. It is vital to identify the risk factors for relapse and to implement rapid-warning mechanisms to enable us to act in time to prevent human rights violations from becoming mass atrocities. That is also the intent of the Secretary-General's Human Rights Up Front initiative, which has an obvious link to the work of the Peacebuilding Commission.

The year 2015 will also be an important one for Guinea. The Guinea configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission, which I have had the honour to chair for the past four years, continues to support Guinean peacebuilding priorities. We currently face two enormous challenges: to address the impact of the Ebola epidemic and to support Guinea in view of its forthcoming electoral process.

The international community must remain actively engaged and vigilant in order to reach and maintain the goal of zero cases of Ebola virus infection in the three countries most affected. From the start of the epidemic, I have worked in concert with the Chairs of the Liberia and Sierra Leone configurations to keep the international community mobilized. Together, we asked the Secretary-General to evaluate the socioeconomic impact of the Ebola epidemic in order to plan for the post-Ebola recovery. The recent report of the United Nations Development Programme, with input from the European Union, the World Bank and the African Development Bank, shows that peacebuilding progress was erased and that national institutions were affected. International assistance should therefore focus on institutional and economic recovery in all three countries. The three corresponding PBC configurations will continue their close collaboration in that regard. I would like in that context to mention the regional dimension of peacebuilding and to highlight the role of organizations such as the Mano River Union. Cooperation with such actors is essential for peacebuilding on a regional scale.

Concerning the second challenge, the configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission is prepared to support Guinea in holding inclusive, free and credible elections. On 1 April, we met with the Special Representative of the Secretary-General and Head of the United Nations Office for West Africa, Mr. Mohammed Ibn Chambas, to discuss the challenges that have arisen in the light of the forthcoming elections. As in 2013, the Guinea configuration is prepared to support the country on the path towards dialogue, the consolidation of democracy and development.

In conclusion, I would like to assure the Assembly that in this crucial year Luxembourg will continue its firm commitment to peacebuilding, whether in its capacity as Chair of the Guinea configuration, as a member of the Guinea-Bissau configuration or as a reliable financial partner of the Peacebuilding Fund.

Ms. Kang Jooyeon (Republic of Korea): We would like to thank the President for convening today's debate and Ambassador Antonio de Aguiar Patriota for his leadership as Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission last year.

As we usher in the tenth anniversary of the Commission, this year provides a very good opportunity for stocktaking and exploring ways to further strengthen the Commission, especially in the light of the ongoing review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture. The review can also benefit from the other current reviews of peace operations and the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000). Indeed,

the nexus between peacekeeping, peacebuilding and women's empowerment is critical to the success of our collective efforts for peace.

When the Commission was established, 10 years ago, its rationale was to bring together all the relevant actors in order to marshal resources and propose integrated strategies for post-conflict peacebuilding. In that context, last year's first-ever annual session, on the theme of "Sustainable support for peacebuilding: the domestic and international aspects", was a belated but significant step forward. We expect that the second annual session scheduled for this June will be a follow-through opportunity to go deeper into the structural obstacles that can undermine the peacebuilding process. Korea, which is deeply committed to strengthening the United Nations peacebuilding process, hopes to make constructive contributions during the annual session. Strengthening the Commission's advisory function vis-à-vis the Security Council also belongs in this area. The informal interactive dialogue between the Commission and the Council is taking root and addressing substantial themes. Periodic stocktaking at the expert level is another example of the two bodies' cooperative evolution. In order to make further progress, their interaction should be encouraged in a more mutually beneficial and constructively critical way in order to seek a better way forward.

Last year, the Ebola virus not only caused serious human loss, it also threatened to undo the peacebuilding achievements that had been made up until then. The Commission's intensive discussion and response to the crisis was timely and constructive in sustaining international attention and support. In the face of those enormous challenges, we paid special attention to the critical role of women as everyday peacebuilders. Now is the time to focus on putting the peacebuilding process back on track while helping to build the affected countries' capacity for resilient governance and economic recovery. The Republic of Korea will continue to take part in that rebuilding process.

We cannot overemphasize the importance of national leadership in the peacebuilding process. More often than not, a relapse into conflict begins from within rather than from outside. No peace can be consolidated without social cohesion and national unity. We hope that national leaders will prioritize inclusiveness in the rebuilding process in the socioeconomic arena as well as the political one, and we hope the international community will continue to provide tailor-made assistance to them in that regard.

Lastly, we support the Peacebuilding Fund's 2014-16 business plan, which addresses cross-border dynamics and ensures enhanced gender-sensitive programmes. The Republic of Korea has contributed $5.5 million to it so far and will continue to take part in the funding rally.

Mr. Wang Min (China) (*spoke in Chinese*): China would like to thank the President for convening today's meeting. We would also like to thank the Permanent Representative of Brazil, Ambassador de Aguiar Patriota, for his presentation of the report of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) on its eighth session (A/69/818), and to express our appreciation for his work during the past year as PBC Chair. And we would like to congratulate the Permanent Representative of Sweden, Ambassador Skoog, on his recent election as the new Chair, and to wish him every success in his new job.

Peacebuilding is an innovative area in the work of the United Nations on peace and security. It is very relevant to the Organization in its fulfilment of its obligations in the maintenance of international peace and security. Since the Commission's establishment, in 2006, the United Nations peacebuilding system has generally functioned very well. The Peacebuilding Commission, the Peacebuilding Fund and the Peacebuilding Support Office have carried out their respective functions in close coordination and have diligently implemented their mandates as laid down in the relevant General Assembly and Security Council resolutions. They have proactively coordinated international support for post-conflict reconstruction in the countries on the agenda. Remarkable achievements have been made, such as in Sierra Leone, Timor-Leste and Haiti, and it has been widely recognized by the countries concerned and by the international community.

At the same time, Member States are exploring new ideas for improving peacebuilding. At the end of last year, the General Assembly, at its sixty-ninth session, and the Security Council together initiated a comprehensive review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture as a major task for the Organization this year, which should help Member States to review the experiences of peacebuilding over the past decade, its failures and successes, and to explore useful ways to improve peacebuilding methods. China is willing to join other Member States in actively participating in the comprehensive review

process, and expects that positive results from it will play a constructive role in helping the United Nations to better fulfil its obligations in maintaining international peace and security. With regard to the issue of how to improve peacebuilding, China would like to propose the following four points.

First, peacebuilding should be owned and led by the countries concerned. The key to achieving lasting peace, stability and development in post-conflict countries lies in the efforts of the countries themselves. When the international community is implementing its support for peacebuilding, it should respect the leadership of the countries concerned, provide them with constructive support according to the countries' wishes and avoid overreaching or attempting to take complete charge and do everything for them, which violates the principle of ownership.

Secondly, peacebuilding should be tailored to local situations. Post-conflict countries deal with varied situations with different peacebuilding focuses, programmes and methods. To produce better results, the international community should proceed from the situations specific to the countries concerned, in order to develop targeted peacebuilding programmes that will ensure that the international assistance is consistent with those countries' needs. Copying or rigidly applying the same modalities in different countries may cause more problems rather than yielding the desired results and promoting the smooth functioning of a peacebuilding operation.

Thirdly, peacebuilding should combine both short-term and medium- and long-term goals. The fundamental goal of peacebuilding should be to help the countries concerned to enhance their capacity for self-sufficiency in order to achieve development on their own. That is a long-term, complex and arduous task that may not be achieved overnight. To win the understanding and support of the people in the countries concerned, various tools should be used to achieve early peacebuilding results to set the basis for mid-term and long-term goals.

Fourthly, peacebuilding requires strengthening of integration and complementarity to enhance efficiency. Peacebuilding involves multiple participants. They include the Governments of the countries on the agenda, other actors and countries concerned, regional organizations, the United Nations, other international organizations, and professional institutions. The United Nations should act as a platform and take optimum advantage of the Peacebuilding Commission to strengthen coordination and complementarity in order to avoid duplication of efforts and a waste of resources. China encourages donors to further increase their support to the Peacebuilding Fund. We also emphasize the need to economize and enhance the efficiency and the effectiveness of the resources.

Ms. Bird (Australia): May I begin by adding my voice to those congratulating Sweden's Permanent Representative Olof Skoog on assuming the Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) and by expressing sincere thanks to his predecessor in that important role, Ambassador De Aguiar Patriota.

Australia welcomes this year's annual General Assembly debate on the reports of the Peacebuilding Commission (A/69/818) and the Peacebuilding Fund (A/69/745). Peacebuilding is essential, core work of the United Nations. To be effective, peacebuilding efforts must be multidimensional, integrated and aligned with national strategies and long-term development efforts.

We welcome the Commission's continued focus on strengthening the coherence of peacebuilding-related engagements in countries on its agenda by highlighting gaps in support and impediments to political, institutional and economic development. The Commission should continue its efforts to build coherence among, and coordinate resource mobilization from, the relevant actors, including Member States, regional partners, international financial institutions and United Nations agencies. Its ability to coordinate closely with the Department of Political Affairs and the Department of Peacekeeping Operations will continue to be important to its success. We look forward to the opportunity to discuss the predictability of financing for peacebuilding during the annual session of the PBC later this year.

We also support the Commission's efforts to build more extensive country-specific and thematic partnerships, including through forging greater regional coherence to sustain peace and avoid a relapse into conflict. In Australia's neighbourhood, the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands provides a good example of how collective regional action can deliver sustained peace in response to a security crisis.

The 2015 Review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture provides an opportunity to continue to work towards this more integrated approach. We welcome existing steps taken to ensure that this review

is coordinated with the Secretary-General's review of peace operations and the global study on women and peace and security. We look forward to the opportunity to consider recommendations of the high-level Advisory Group of Experts in the second half of 2015.

We also acknowledge the importance of the Peacebuilding Fund as a mechanism to provide fast, flexible funding in post-conflict contexts. We welcome the focus of the Peacebuilding Fund on the Indo-Pacific region, with allocations in 2014 to Nepal, Papua New Guinea and the Philippines. The future role of the Fund in Papua New Guinea, with a priority plan approved for the Autonomous Region of Bougainville in October last year, is of particular note. The timely roll-out of activities on the ground will be important as Bougainville enters a five-year window for a referendum on its future political status in June this year.

We also welcome the continued focus of the Fund in supporting women's empowerment and gender equality through its second Gender Promotion Initiative. Empowering women, as others have said here today, is critical to building inclusive and sustainable peace.

Finally, we agree with the findings of the November 2014 independent review of the joint United Nations Development Programme-Department of Political Affairs programme on building national capacities for conflict prevention on the value of peace and development advisers. Such advisers play an important role in assisting the relevant Resident Coordinators to strategically guide the United Nations system in-country, including in navigating political conversations with Governments.

Mr. Iliichev (Russian Federation) (*spoke in Russian*): Peacebuilding assistance is one of the key tools of the United Nations for the effective resolution of conflicts, the stabilization of post-conflict situations and preventing the resumption of devastating crises. We believe that national Governments bear the primary responsibility for setting priorities and implementing restorative strategies. Corresponding international efforts should focus on building up the institutional capacity of the affected countries with their agreement, while respecting the national sovereignty and political independence of countries receiving the assistance. However, we cannot say that peacebuilding activities can be carried out only for State-building and the restoration of Government authority, because this is a complex and multifaceted process that includes economic development assistance and addressing pressing social issues, in addition to political aspects. In the post-conflict context, we also consider it counterproductive to focus excessively on gender and human rights issues, which are not immediately related to the primary crises situations.

Russia supports the activities of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) to increase the United Nations effectiveness and strengthen its coordination of international assistance for post-conflict countries. We express appreciation to the Permanent Representative of Brazil for his effective leadership of the work of the Commission in 2014. We expect that the existing positive momentum in its work will be strengthened under the Swedish chairmanship.

We take note of the report of the PBC on the work of its eighth session (A/69/818). In the past year, the work schedule of the Commission was very full. Its first substantive session on the topic of mobilizing resources for post-conflict reconstruction was held, and, in our opinion, it was substantive and open. The event confirmed that the PBC has great potential in the role of a unique dialogue platform for intergovernmental discussions on current generic or cross-cutting peacebuilding issues.

The concerted efforts of Member States were noted in the modalities of the review for the United Nations peacebuilding architecture. We expect that the group of experts appointed by the Secretary-General will conduct an objective study and submit a balanced set of recommendations to the Security Council and the General Assembly for consideration, which will enhance the effectiveness of the work of the PBC as an intergovernmental body playing a central role in the United Nations peacebuilding architecture — in strict compliance with the statutory prerogatives of the principal organs of this global Organization.

We see a certain logic in the declared theme of the second substantive session, which will be dedicated to issues of sustainable financing for peacebuilding activities. We believe that discussions should not transcend the mandate of the Commission and create an alternative track for discussion of issues that are supposed to be addressed in the framework of other relevant structures of the General Assembly.

Over the past year, the Commission continued to undertake energetic efforts to assist countries on its agenda, including in the framework of the country-

specific configurations. For example, the efforts of Burundi to resolve post-conflict issues of recovery and peacebuilding and to ensure peace, security and stability made it possible from 1 January to change the format of the United Nations presence in that country. The key to consolidating the positive results lies in the hands of Burundians themselves, who are capable without outside interference or pressure of solving the emerging issues on an equal footing. However, the relapse into armed conflict in the Central African Republic and South Sudan, where there was unjustified and sometimes externally imposed ranking of priorities and where already limited resources were squandered and scattered, along with interference in areas under the purview of other stakeholders, requires thorough analysis in order to avoid a repeat of that experience.

The outbreak of the Ebola virus challenged the Peacebuilding Commission's achievements in peace and security in Sierra Leone, Guinea and Liberia. Drawing on its expert capacity, the Commission was swiftly able to adapt to the needs of those Governments and to contribute to international efforts to address the crisis situation. The Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) remains an important mechanism for rapid financing that enables long-term resources to be allocated for recovery and development. We note the coordinated financial assistance of the PBF for international efforts in countries affected by Ebola, as well as the attainment of the set goal to allocate $100 million to peacebuilding projects. We insist on the importance of countries distributing financial assistance, and we call for the upcoming session of the Peacebuilding Commission to be used as a forum for discussing possible paths towards improving the current tools of the Fund and increasing the predictability of financing for peacebuilding.

Ms. Mejía Vélez (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): I would like to acknowledge the work of the Ambassador of Brazil, Antonio de Aguiar Patriota, outgoing Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), who achieved important progress and oversaw robust activities in 2014, as can be clearly seen in the reports of the Commission (A/69/818) and the Peacebuilding Fund (A/69/745). At the same time, I would like to express my wishes for success to Ambassador Olof Skoog in his work as Chair of the Commission during this very important year. Given his statement this morning, I am sure that our priorities and strategies are the right ones to proceed with the work ahead.

Colombia stresses the importance of the Peacebuilding Commission and the Peacebuilding Fund as key elements of the United Nations mandate. We therefore reiterate our support and commitment as a new member of the Commission during this session, as well as in our capacity as a member of the Fund's Advisory Group at the behest of the Secretary-General.

With respect to the report of the Peacebuilding Commission, Colombia considers that it is vital to continue discussion on the need for coherence across peacebuilding policies and activities. The first annual session of the Commission in 2014 achieved significant progress in identifying areas that would benefit from more coordinated work. That will be strengthened by identifying gaps and by the implementation of activities, as well as by coordinating support within the organization as well as bilaterally and with other stakeholders. In that regard, we wish to stress the joint work of the Commission with the Peacebuilding Support Office and with the Peacebuilding Fund. The harmonization of their complementary functions and strategies aimed at increasing cooperation has led to visible progress in the countries on the agenda.

We recognize the growing role of regional and subregional organizations in peacebuilding processes and their increased role, in particular through the establishment of dynamic and coherent associations with country-specific priorities that favour the evolution of work on the ground.

Peacebuilding efforts require the mobilization of long-, medium- and short-term financial, technical and political support. International mechanisms encounter difficulties when they need to ensure timely, sustainable support. Colombia therefore insists on the importance of deepening the discussion on the theme of predictable financing. Countries emerging from conflict face economic and political challenges that imply substantial resource needs. The Commission is the most appropriate platform for helping develop and implement national strategies for mobilizing peacebuilding resources and to advocate for their timely release.

Colombia highlights the role of women in conflict prevention and resolution and in peacebuilding. It is vital to continue to promote the integration of the issue of gender in the work of the Commission and the Fund. Women should become crucial actors in peace agreements, in national reconciliation processes and in the formulation of national policies, ensuring that all

such processes are open to issues of gender from their inception. Much remains to be done in those areas.

Continued exploration of the nature and reach of the Commission's advisory role to the General Assembly and the Security Council remains a priority in order to achieve complementarity and coordination of peacebuilding processes. It is essential to continue the exchange of opinions, even at times in a more frank and dynamic manner, among those United Nations bodies, along with a joint analysis of expectations, progress achieved and the identification of realistic goals.

Finally, Colombia reiterates its interest in the results of the 10-year review of the peacebuilding architecture and hopes that the lessons that emerge will strengthen the impact of peacebuilding work on the ground, as well as the Commission's ability and authority to offer advice on policies to improve the life of populations in countries emerging from conflict, which is, after all, its most important task. A successful peacebuilding process based on national ownership and the strengthening of national capacities is the first step towards leaving behind a past of conflict and confrontation and offers the opportunity to cement in an enduring way the foundations of a promising future for the affected populations.

Mr. Alsayed (Egypt) (*spoke in Arabic*): I would like at the outset to express my appreciation to Brazil for its leadership as Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), as well as for the report (A/69/818) on the PBC's work. We also thank the Peacebuilding Support Office. My delegation looks forward to cooperating with Sweden under its chairmanship of the PBC this year. We are fully confident in its ability to achieve success.

Egypt is sure that the role of the Peacebuilding Commission is very important. With the experience of its members, it is working to coordinate the efforts among the various stakeholders in peacebuilding, including United Nations teams in countries emerging from crisis, the Security Council, the General Assembly and international, regional and local partners in those States, so as to avoid relapse into conflict. Through its role and by ensuring national ownership of programmes, and aware that no one modality fits all States, the Commission has contributed to aligning international efforts with priorities and strategies defined at the national level. The Commission also worked to support the cooperation framework with financial institutions at the international and regional levels, in order to come up with creative and sustainable solutions to the problems of financing for peacebuilding programmes. The report shows the large number of topics that the Commission addressed in 2014, some of which could be on its agenda this year. I would like to focus on several of those topics.

First, last year, the Commission held its first annual session on the topic of resources and combating illicit financial flows in States emerging from conflict. The second annual session will be based on the results of the first session and concern predictable financing for peacebuilding activities in order to address a lack of sufficient governmental mechanisms that guarantee rapid and flexible financing sustainable in the long term, to promote national capacities for the creation of national resources, and to control illicit financial flows.

Secondly, preparations for the review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture have been completed, and the review aims to examine the working methods of the Peacebuilding Commission in dealing with the recent challenges in States emerging from conflict in order to increase the effectiveness of the United Nations in supplying assistance to those States. Egypt expects to effectively participate in the intergovernmental negotiations, to be held during the second half of this year, on the results of the study by the Group of Experts.

Thirdly, in addition to the activities of the Peacebuilding Commission and peacebuilding activities in countries emerging from conflict and receiving assistance from the international community, I would like to commend the Commission's crucial role in addressing the Ebola crisis. It was the most dangerous health crisis that the world has known in recent years. The Commission has continued to raise awareness. It dealt with the first stages of the crisis concerning the risks to what we have achieved in recent years for peacebuilding in the three countries affected, all of which were on the Commission's agenda. They were able to develop strategies to rapidly deal with the virus.

Egypt attaches particular importance to the coordination and complementarity between the role of the Peacebuilding Commission and the African Union. The Cairo Regional Centre for Training on Conflict Resolution, in coordination with the Office of Peacebuilding Support, organized a workshop in December 2014 on the regional aspects of peacebuilding activities. Above all, it focused on the role of regional parties in supporting the reconstruction of States and of State institutions, in addition to promoting political

processes, in countries emerging from conflict. Egypt reaffirms the importance of the ownership of African States for the peacebuilding programmes that concern them. That was again seen through the initiative to establish the African Union post-conflict reconstruction and development centre, which would create African frameworks that would contribute to building national institutions during the post-conflict phase.

Finally, I welcome the Secretary-General's report (A/69/745) on the Peacebuilding Fund. I welcome also the role of the Fund in providing assistance to peacebuilding activities in more than 20 countries in spite of limited resources and increasing needs. We reiterate the importance of achieving sufficient coordination between the Peacebuilding Fund and international partners, especially the International Monetary Fund and the African Development Bank, in addition to the United Nations missions and agencies working in the field, for greater effectiveness in financing and finding creative and durable solutions that contribute to guaranteeing more flexible financing that responds to the needs in the field.

Mr. Drobnjak (Croatia): Croatia aligns itself with the statement of the European Union. I would like to make some additional remarks in my national capacity.

I would like to begin by expressing my appreciation to the former Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), Ambassador Antonio de Aguiar Patriota, for his leadership during the past year. I wish the new Chair, Ambassador Olof Skoog, every success during his chairmanship of the PBC. We commend the work of the Chairs of the configurations as well as the Chair of the PBC Working Group on Lessons Learned. Allow me also to use this opportunity to express our appreciation to Assistant Secretary-General Oscar Fernandez-Taranco and his able team in the Peacebuilding Support Office for their dedicated work and efforts.

Croatia has been a strong supporter of the PBC since its very inception. We strongly advocated for the establishment of the Commission and served as a member during its first session. We believed then and continue to believe in the importance and relevance of its work.

With regard to the work of the PBC during the reporting period, let me briefly touch upon two significant developments: the response of the Commission to the Ebola crisis and the first-ever annual session. We would like to highlight the role of the Commission in drawing the attention of the international community and the United Nations system to the implications of the Ebola crisis for the peacebuilding gains of the three countries most affected, which are also on the PBC agenda. We welcome the fact that the PBC convened, in June 2014, its first-ever annual session. We hope that the format will contribute to a higher level of commitment and ownership of the PBC agenda by its members, which is key to ensuring that the PBC delivers on its vast potential.

We look forward to the second annual session, to be held this year, and its focus on predictable financing for peacebuilding. The topic is particularly important given the increase in demand for financial support, both by new users and through the scaling up of current programmes. However, we must say that it all comes in contrast to the remaining funding gap.

Peacebuilding requires the sustained and coordinated commitment of national, regional and international actors. It also requires inclusiveness. We are of the view that women's empowerment greatly contributes to enhancing inclusiveness and cohesion in post-conflict situations. We therefore welcome the fact that the PBC continues to attach importance to the role of women in peacebuilding and to their contribution to building and sustaining peace. We commend the fact that the Fund's business plan for 2014 to 2016, adopted last year, envisages enhanced attention to gender-sensitive programming via the launch of the second Gender Promotion Initiative.

Peacebuilding has evolved considerably since 2005, and many agree that the PBC should adapt to a rapidly changing environment. In that context, we share the view that we should make the most of the 2015 review of the peacebuilding architecture in order to make it more relevant and as effective as possible. We believe that the review process of the peacebuilding architecture should be linked to other review processes currently under way, namely, the review of peacekeeping operations and the review of the progress in the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), as well as to a new sustainable development agenda. All those processes should be bold and ambitious in their recommendations and establish strong linkages between peace, security, development and human rights.

Peacebuilding requires collaborative efforts by a range of actors, and there is a need for parallel focus on political, security and development issues. We see good governance as a crucial component for peacebuilding

processes. In that context, we believe that additional effort should be put into strengthening the cooperation of the PBC with the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, as well as improving coordination and collaboration with regional and subregional organizations. We stress the importance of forging greater regional coherence as a key factor in helping countries to sustain peace and avoid relapse into conflict.

Furthermore, we take note of increasing security challenges. While we are concerned about the possibility of spillover in general, we are in fact particularly concerned about the spread of terrorism. This shows the need to finance projects that are not ordinarily peacebuilding-oriented.

It should also be stressed that national ownership and responsibility and the building of national capacities based on specific national needs must be at the heart of any peacebuilding effort. In that regard, we especially welcome new steering mechanisms developed by the Fund together with the United Nations missions, with the aim of ensuring more effective national ownership and strategic guidance to projects.

I would like to conclude by reiterating Croatia's strong support for United Nations peacebuilding efforts and our strong commitment to the work of the Commission.

Mr. Van der Vliet (Netherlands): The Kingdom of the Netherlands welcomes today's debate as well as the report of the Peacebuilding Commission on its eighth session (A/69/818) and the report of the Secretary-General on the Peacebuilding Fund (A/69/745).

We align ourselves with the statement made by the Head of the Delegation of the European Union.

I appreciate this opportunity to speak and to reiterate the commitment of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to peacebuilding. Peacebuilding is crucial for addressing the gap between security and development in fragile post-conflict countries.

Before continuing, I would like to thank the former Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), Ambassador Antonio de Aguiar Patriota, for his commitment and achievements in the past year. I would also like to congratulate Ambassador Olof Skoog on his election as the new Chair of the PBC. Lastly, I would like to thank the Peacebuilding Support Office and Assistant Secretary-General Oscar Fernandez-Taranco for their ongoing support.

The two annual reports under discussion today are both comprehensive documents, signalling the complexity of peacebuilding challenges. The Kingdom of the Netherlands can relate to this complexity, as we are engaged in peacebuilding activities in many countries worldwide. We believe that the United Nations has a central role to play when it comes to peacekeeping and peacebuilding. For that reason, the Kingdom of the Netherlands has been a staunch supporter of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture since its inception, both politically and financially. To illustrate, over the last decade, the Netherlands has donated over €50 million to the Peacebuilding Fund, ranking it as one of the Fund's top donors. In addition, the Netherlands is an active member of the Burundi configuration, and we are pleased to be on the Organizational Committee again.

The year 2015 is a year marked by reviews. It is a year where we take stock of what we have learned in order to collectively prepare for the challenges that lie ahead. The Netherlands looks forward to making an active contribution to the review of the peacebuilding architecture. In that regard, I would like to take this opportunity to briefly highlight four issues that stand out.

First, to prevent conflict is better than to remedy it. One of the original aims of the peacebuilding architecture was to address this precise issue. We believe that the full arsenal of instruments available to the United Nations should be used to maximum effect with regard to early warning and early action.

Secondly, with regard to the interlinkage between peacekeeping and peacebuilding, it is essential to include peacebuilding elements in the build-up of United Nations missions and in the post-mission transition process in order to prevent a relapse into conflict. It is therefore important to align the review of the peacebuilding architecture with the peace operations review. This point was emphasized during the regional conference on peace operations that the Netherlands organized in February. In addition, alignment with the review of the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) is important, as the adoption of a gender perspective to consider the special needs of women and girls during conflict and in post-conflict reconstruction should be

part of an integrated approach in both peacekeeping and peacebuilding.

Thirdly, perhaps the most important lesson we have learned is that peacebuilding is a multidimensional process. Fostering peace, justice and development in vulnerable countries necessitates a comprehensive approach. It requires a clear vision and strategy based on shared goals, complemented by continuing political commitment, financing for development and ways to provide security in an effective and accountable manner. The Netherlands has gained significant experience with this approach over the last decade, as illustrated, for example, by our contribution to the integrated peacekeeping mission in Mali, where we have adapted our bilateral cooperation programmes accordingly.

Fourthly, the Kingdom of the Netherlands believes in working in partnership. It is therefore of crucial importance to continue to work in close cooperation with recipient countries and to make sure their voices are heard in the review process.

The peacebuilding agenda is a comprehensive agenda. Because of this, we warmly welcome the broad terms of reference for the review of the peacebuilding architecture, which look beyond the core peacebuilding institutions and take into account the functioning of the United Nations system as a whole. In that context, the Netherlands also looks forward to the PBC's annual session in June, where predictable financing for peacebuilding and breaking the silos will be discussed.

In conclusion, the Kingdom of the Netherlands will remain a partner for peace, justice and development. Accordingly, let me reiterate our strong support for the United Nations peacebuilding architecture.

Mr. Gasana (Rwanda): I would like to extend my sincere thanks to Ambassador Antonio de Aguiar Patriota of Brazil, former Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC), for his presentation of the PBC's report on its eighth session (A/69/818). I also wish to thank him for the dedication and strong commitment he showed as he led the work of the Commission during the year 2014. I also thank Ambassador Olof Skoog of Sweden, current Chair of the PBC, for his statement.

Rwanda would like to welcome the report of the PBC and the report of the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) (A/69/745), which provide a comprehensive analysis of progress made so far in the implementation of the recommendations of the 2010 review, as well as the continuing challenges that the Commission must address as it supports countries emerging from conflict.

The topics covered by the report before the Assembly today reflect the scope of those challenges. The Commission has therefore emerged as the voice of our conscience, calling for greater commitment and collective efforts to ensure that we live up to the expectations of peoples and societies aspiring to sustained peace and development.

My delegation would like to highlight the importance of building on the important areas of focus identified in 2014, namely, the preparation for and convening of its first-ever annual session in June; the advanced preparations for the 2015 review of the peacebuilding architecture; and the mainstreaming of regional perspectives into the work of the Commission. We also note the Commission's particular engagement in the country-specific configurations through a continued focus on its three core functions, namely, its advisory, advocacy and resources mobilization roles.

We note with appreciation the Commission's focus on and engagement in countries affected by the Ebola outbreak, which has had an impact on peace, security and development. The Commission contributed to the sustained international attention that curtailed the spread of the outbreak and minimized its impact, especially on peacebuilding-related gains in the affected countries. Stakeholders, including the United Nations and international financial institutions, should maintain that momentum in order to sustain the recent gains towards a lasting solution to the crisis.

On resource mobilization, we call for continued advocacy on behalf of the countries on the agenda, and help in underscoring political and socioeconomic progress to attract assistance and investments. We also call for identifying entry points to tap into the potential of foundations, the private sector and other non-traditional donors.

On country-specific configurations, we welcome such engagement in Burundi, which oversaw the planning for the transfer of responsibilities from the United Nations Office in Burundi to the Government of Burundi and the United Nations country team, including intensified engagement with key regional partners, at a time when Burundi is witnessing political tensions ahead of general elections. The visit undertaken to Rwanda in May of last year by Ambassador Paul Seger of Switzerland, Chair of the Burundi country-specific

configuration, as well as to the headquarters of the Economic Commission for Africa, is commendable in that regard.

Mindful of the positive role of women in post-conflict reconstruction, Rwanda welcomed the Commission's consideration of the gender dimension in peacebuilding activities. We also welcomed the recommendations from the special event held on 3 September last year under the theme "Women, Everyday Peacebuilders". The Commission should promote regular events of that nature, not only in New York but also in countries on its agenda, as well as on behalf of the relevant regional groupings.

On the working methods, we encourage the Commission to identify and document good practices of the past 10 years, including by encouraging cross-learning among configurations. We believe that, since 2005, the United Nations should have been able to identify a set of good practices and lessons learned on ways that support to national efforts to build and sustain peace can be more effective. Despite positive developments in that regard, further progress is still needed.

We hope that the ongoing review will provide an opportunity to address the broader landscape of the United Nations response in post-conflict situations and ways by which the roles and responsibilities of the PBC, PBF and the Peacebuilding Support Office can be adapted to strengthen such response.

We also hope that the review will help to reinforce efforts to promote a more effective and complementary relationship between the PBC and the main organs of the United Nations, namely, the General Assembly, the Security Council and the Economic and Social Council. We encourage the Commission to continue to explore ways to strengthen the advisory function to and improve interaction with the Security Council — especially by convening periodic stocktaking meetings at the expert level — as well as informal interactive dialogue among members of the Council and the Commission's group of Chairs. Rwanda's experience as former coordinator of that stocktaking exercise, during our 2013-2014 term in the Security Council, allowed the Council to examine the scope of the Commission's advisory function and the modality of interaction when countries are on the agenda of both bodies. It also allowed the Council to receive regular updates from countries on those agendas.

I will conclude by saying a word on the report of the Peacebuilding Fund. We noted that there was a significant increase in contributions in 2014 as compared with the level of 2013. We thank the Member States and donors that have made that valuable contribution.

We welcomed the General Assembly-mandated periodic review of the Peacebuilding Fund to guide the revision of the Fund's business plan in 2014, and we hope that the Fund will be able to grow in size and scope in order to further strengthen its contribution to greater and more coherent United Nations contributions to peacebuilding in countries emerging from conflict.

Mr. Seger (Switzerland) (*spoke in French*): As others before me have noted, the current year has been a crucial one for peacebuilding architecture, as it will undergo its second review following that of 2010. Switzerland welcomes the approach chosen for the review, which comprises two phases, namely, a report drafted by the Advisory Group of experts based on case studies, followed by an intergovernmental process. As compared with 2010, it should generate improved follow-up on the recommendations resulting from our negotiations.

Switzerland welcomes the efforts under way by the Advisory Group of experts, under the direction of Ambassador Gert Rosenthal, and remains available to share its experiences as Chair of the Burundi country-specific configuration of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) with the experts; Burundi is one of the five case studies.

As the Assembly is aware, the current review comprises a broader scope. At the same time, the Secretary-General has launched a review of peacekeeping operations. While the two processes differ, they overlap on several topics. Therefore, close coordination of the two reviews and recommendations resulting from the two groups of experts is desirable.

We must also avoid marginalization regarding the review of the peacebuilding architecture — it must be ensured the necessary attention on the part of Member States and the Secretariat.

That last point is of even greater importance given the review of the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000) and, especially, the broad exercise of drafting the sustainable development goals, which is an additional item on the Assembly's

agenda this year. However, it also represents a genuine opportunity for achieving synergy.

In that context, we suggest using the opportunity of the review to examine improved ways of using the peacebuilding architecture, not only in situations of post-conflict but also in preventing conflict. Experience shows that post-conflict factors often appear before a conflict. When all efforts are focused on preventive architecture, why should the Peacebuilding Commission not deal with potential conflict situations with the goal of maintaining peace? Clearly, such a commitment must be made with the agreement of the country in question, in order to respect national ownership. But the fact that the PBC could offer a flexible and friendly environment could encourage an affected country to discuss the situation with the PBC, especially if the alternative would be its inclusion on the Security Council's agenda.

In discussing important times for the PBC, I would also like to discuss the key time period for peacebuilding in which Burundi finds itself. It is the country-specific configuration that Switzerland has chaired since 2009. The elections to be convened in the country between the end of May and August of this year will demonstrate the extent of Burundi's progress towards peace and sustainable development.

As today's discussion is a general one, I shall refrain from spending too much time on the situation in Burundi. However, I would like to assure the Assembly that the configuration will follow very closely the developments in that country and will do everything in its power to support free, transparent, credible, inclusive and peaceful elections. At the same time, I invite all States Members of the United Nations and agencies to support the country and the Burundian people in this crucial phase. Provided that the elections are carried out satisfactorily, the PBC configuration is prepared to refocus, with the agreement with the Government, its commitment to a greater degree on socioeconomic development. That does not mean we will be abandoning peace activities. Experience shows us that the mantra "there is no peace without development, and there is no development without peace" is often repeated because it is true. That is certainly a lesson to be learned during the review of the peacebuilding architecture, and which I mentioned at the beginning of my statement. Switzerland considers the fact that the PBC is the only United Nations body that covers aspects of peace and development a great advantage.

In conclusion, Switzerland would like to express its profound thanks to the previous Chair of the PBC, Ambassador Antonio de Aguiar Patriota, as well as to Assistant Secretary-General Oscar Fernández-Taranco and his team for their valuable efforts. We would also like to express our full support for the work of the current Chair of the PBC, Mr. Olof Skoog, Ambassador of Sweden.

Ms. Frankinet (Belgium) (*spoke in French*): Belgium fully endorses the statement made by the observer of the European Union. We would like to add a few additional remarks in our national capacity.

During the past year, the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) had an opportunity to address the issue of transition where there is a drawdown of a United Nations mission, and to consider the challenges inherent in that process — namely, maintaining the attention of the international community on the country concerned, pursuing the political process, and continuity in terms of aid and capacity support. Burundi and Sierra Leone are two countries on the agenda of the PBC that find themselves in that particular situation, whereas, Liberia, after a hiatus, will see the continued downsizing in the staff of the United Nations Mission in Liberia.

Those challenges illustrate the fact that peacebuilding efforts constitute a lengthy process that requires a long-term commitment and strategy from national authorities, local actors, civil society and bilateral and multilateral partners. The report before us today (A/69/818) focuses primarily on the importance, in that context, of social cohesion and institution-building. Security-sector reform is certainly one example. The inclusive nature of the peacebuilding process is essential to national ownership. All of those aspects are fundamental to the work of the PBC, in particular in the context of joint instruments of commitment.

Belgium welcomes the attention placed on the work of the PBC in the domestic mobilization of resources, with special emphasis placed on curbing illicit financial flows and on revenues stemming from the exploitation of natural resources. The presence of natural resources in countries emerging from conflict can provide excellent opportunities in terms of revenue, job creation and economic recovery, but also brings complex challenges in terms of management and the combat against illegal

exploitation, which should be taken into account in the peacebuilding process.

Belgium also wishes to acknowledge the outreach efforts carried out by the Peacebuilding Commission and its various geographic configurations with regard to the possible impact of the Ebola epidemic on the peacebuilding process, stability, economic well-being and social cohesion in the three countries on its agenda: Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea. As announced two days ago by the Minister of Development Cooperation of my country, Mr. Alexander De Croo, at the special Commission event on the Ebola crisis, Belgium has contributed €40 million to combat the epidemic and its effects through United Nations agencies and programmes, as well as through other organizations, such as Médecins Sans Frontières.

The Peacebuilding Commission also warned about the negative impact of isolating those countries, which would have worsened their situation, especially in economic terms. In that regard, I would like to underscore the role played by the private sector, in this case Brussels Airlines, which continued to provide flight service to those countries throughout the crisis, enabling the delivery of humanitarian aid as well the movement of humanitarian personnel, thereby avoiding the isolation of those countries.

In conclusion, Belgium would like to thank the Permanent Representative of Brazil, Ambassador Antonio de Aguiar Patriota, for his commitment and work at the head of the Commission, and to wish every success to his successor, Ambassador Olof Skoog, Permanent Representative of Sweden. Belgium also welcomes the role played and the support provided by Mr. Oscar Fernández-Taranco, Assistant Secretary-General for Peacebuilding Support, as well as his predecessor, Ms. Judy Cheng-Hopkins, and the Office she leads in support of the work and activities carried out by the Peacebuilding Commission. Finally, I can assure the Assembly that Belgium will continue to be closely involved in the Commission's work and that it will participate fully in the review process of the peacebuilding architecture.

Ms. Colín Ortega (Mexico) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation welcomes the report of the Peacebuilding Commission on its eighth session (A/69/818) in the light of this crucial year during which the second five-year review of the peacebuilding architecture is under way. In that regard, we welcome the work carried out by the Advisory Group of Experts on Review of Peacebuilding Architecture, chaired by Gert Rosenthal.

The tragic resumption of the conflict in Central African Republic and the setback to the progress achieved by the Peacebuilding Commission has impacted the large-scale United Nations Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic. That reveals the high risk of relapse into conflict when institutions are weak and social cohesion is fragile.

The Ebola crisis was also a challenge that led to lessons learned for the Commission, as the epidemic jeopardized the progress achieved in the countries on its agenda. The platform for dialogue and coordination provided by the Commission led to exhanges on the effects the crisis had on economic development, security, governance and the political institutions in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone. It also showed the need to increase international efforts aimed at mitigating the decline in economic growth, the effect on public financing and the basic functioning of the State in those three countries.

Mexico recognizes that the transition of United Nations missions is a key area where the Commission can provide a valuable contribution. Going beyond an advisory capacity, the Commission's active engagement is key to a smooth and gradual transition from a peacekeeping operation to a development-oriented United Nations presence. The Commission can identify areas that require greater attention and support from the international community. It can also be used as a platform where the views of all the relevant actors, including national, regional and international ones, can make their contributions to define mandates and strategies for the transition from peace operations to peacebuilding missions.

Along those lines, my delegation would like to appeal to the Security Council to consider two challenges identified by the Commission in the transition process: guaranteeing support for technical and financial capacities for national peacebuilding priorities and providing support to sustain inclusive political processes. More dynamic interaction and cooperation between the Commission and the Security Council would make the Commission's participation even more productive. My delegation believes an extremely useful practice is to have the Chairs of the country-specific configurations hold periodic meetings with the Security Council on the countries on its agenda. Likewise, Mexico welcomes the Commission's proposal

to prepare a strategy to include a gender perspective in the work of the Commission in each country. That initiative would be an important contribution to the implementation of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), on women and peace and security.

Five years ago, Mexico, along with Ireland and South Africa, headed the first review process of the Peacebuilding Commission. The methodology and the political environment of the Commission were completely different at the time. The results of that review made it possible to identify the work of the Commission in clearer terms, not just in the peacebuilding architecture but also in ensuring international peace and security as a whole. Today, this is clearer that ever when we look at the setbacks in some of the countries on the agenda of the Commission and the emergence of new challenges facing those countries, such as the Ebola virus.

In terms of this year's review, Mexico believes that the review should consider the following aspects: reviewing the transitions from peacekeeping missions; looking at critical systemic shortcomings that undermine the effectiveness of the United Nations in post-conflict situations; improving the mandates and programmes aimed at rebuilding institutions and bolstering national reconciliation processes; strengthening working methods and working tools of the Commission so that its advisory, support and advocacy roles can be further strengthened; and looking at ways to improve the coherence and consistency of the Commission's decisions, as well as to bring about more uniform monitoring of commitments made by the relevant multilateral forums.

The five-year review process should be taken advantage of to generate ideas to strengthen the functioning and influence of the Commission in order to enable it to fulfil its potential and improve its advisory capacity to the General Assembly and the Security Council. My delegation will continue to participate constructively in this review process, as well as in the other review processes currently ongoing, namely, the review of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture and the United Nations high-level review on Security Council resolution 1325 (2000). We hope that those processes will yield synergies and be mutually reinforcing in order to further strengthen the response of the United Nations system. Particular attention should be given to the assessment of the United Nations integrated offices that help to consolidate peace, which in and of themselves are special political missions. On occasion, they are working on the ground with peacekeeping operations and with the country configurations of the Peacebuilding Commission.

Mr. Kydyrov (Kyrgyzstan): At the outset, I would like to thank the Peacebuilding Commission and the Secretary-General for their comprehensive reports (A/69/818 and A/69/745). We share the analyses and key recommendations of the reports.

Kyrgyzstan fully supports the activities of the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) as a unique mechanism of assisting countries in overcoming conflict and post-conflict situations and in achieving peace and stability. It continues to play a significant role in the United Nations peacebuilding architecture. That is why it is crucial to increase donor contributions to enable the Fund to reach its $100 million target and effectively implement its business plan for the next two years.

Kyrgyzstan has actively cooperated with the PBF since 2010, when the Fund allocated $10 million to Kyrgyzstan for immediate-response projects in order to prevent the escalation of the conflict in the south of the country. As a result, we managed to effectively implement projects on post-conflict rehabilitation and stabilization of the situation. An important strategic decision was made in 2013 when the Fund allocated an additional $15 million for long-term stabilization and recovery, and in 2014 Kyrgyzstan started implementing 10 projects. They included such key priorities as the promotion of the rule of law, justice and human rights, the development of local Government, multilingual education and civic identity.

I would like to underline that those projects are implemented by seven United Nations agencies — the United Nations Development Programme, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime, UNICEF, the United Nations Population Fund and UN-Women — in close and effective cooperation with the relevant State institutions, as well as with local self-Government bodies and civil society. We strongly believe that the implementation of those projects will further consolidate peace and stability in the country and strengthen inter-ethnic unity. In that regard, I would like to highlight the adoption of the concept of strengthening national unity and inter-ethnic relations, as well as the concept of the State policy in the religious sphere.

I would also like to stress the importance of continuing to strengthen monitoring, lessons learned and evaluation exercises. It should be noted that a joint steering committee was set up in 2013 to support the activities of the Peacebuilding Fund and United Nations agencies in Kyrgyzstan. Twenty-eight members of the Committee represent the Parliament of the country, the Offices of the President and the Government, governmental agencies, civil society organizations and United Nations agencies. The Committee provides guidance over the Kyrgyzstan peacebuilding priority plan by monitoring and steering the implementation of the funded projects, and also ensuring the achievement of key results. As mentioned in the reports, Kyrgyzstan has made sound, substantive progress.

We believe that women's empowerment and gender equality should be given high priority. In that regard, we welcome the PBF Gender Promotion Initiative to broaden support for women's empowerment and gender equality. We appreciate that last year the PBF approved two project proposals with a budget of more than $1.6 million for Kyrgyzstan. Those projects aim at promoting gender equality and the empowerment of women in Kyrgyzstan, as well as at solving the problem of accessibility to reliable data and at preventing and effectively responding to gender-based violence.

We are confident that those projects will also make a significant contribution to the realization of the Kyrgyzstan national action plan on Security Council Resolution 1325 (2000) and to ensuring more active participation by women in peacebuilding activities. Kyrgyzstan also welcomes the PBF regional approach within the framework of its business plan for the years 2014 to 2016. A programme has been developed on cross-border cooperation and sustainable peace and development, which we hope will enhance cooperation and regional interaction between countries border ours, such as Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan.

Kyrgyzstan will conduct parliamentary elections in November. The President of Kyrgyzstan, Almazbek Atambaev, has stressed the importance of free and fair elections as a milestone in the country's transition to a parliamentary democracy, as well as strengthening national unity in order to move resolutely towards sustainable development. In that regard, we highly appreciate PBF projects in Kyrgyzstan. They address the main challenges and focus on the most vulnerable part of our society and on strengthening potential at the national and local levels. We expect that the PBF will continue to play an active role in assisting in strengthening stability, peace and human development. My delegation will continue to actively cooperate with the PBF and United Nations agencies and to give our full support.

Mr. Petersen (Denmark): Denmark associates itself with the statement delivered by the observer of the European Union this morning.

At the outset, allow me to pay tribute to Brazil, and in particular to the Permanent Representative Ambassador Patriota, for its effective and outstanding chairmanship of the Peacebuilding Commission over the past year. I also pay tribute to Sweden and Ambassador Olof Skoog for taking up this crucial task in the year to come. The Chair of the Commission can count on Denmark's full support in achieving the priorities set out for the next year.

The year 2015 is a crucial year for the United Nations peacebuilding architecture. Denmark actively supported its establishment 10 years ago and is committed to contributing to a successful and ambitious outcome of this year's review process. At stake is the United Nations ability to ensure lasting peace in post-conflict situations. This runs at the very heart of the Organization's role in the maintenance of peace and security.

The review must take an honest look at both the successes and the shortcomings of the functioning of the institutions that make up the peacebuilding architecture. We must deliver progress in and strengthen the United Nations ability to stabilize countries in post-conflict situations and fragile States, in ensuring more effective transitions from conflict to peacebuilding and development, and in fostering a more coherent, coordinated and comprehensive peacebuilding effort at the country level.

With its wide donor space, the Peacebuilding Fund enjoys broad support and is an effective instrument within the United Nations architecture. Denmark has contributed to the Fund since its inception with multi-year contributions in 2006 and 2012. A new commitment for the coming years is currently being planned. Last year's review of the Peacebuilding Fund was a further testament to the positive contribution that the Fund has been making. In particular, Denmark welcomes the increased focus on monitoring and evaluation of the Fund's activities and impacts. To

maintain the wide support for the Fund, it is crucial that the results of the Fund's work be clearly documented.

Allocations from the Peacebuilding Fund should continue to focus on the most fragile post-conflict countries. Denmark particularly welcomes the Fund's engagement in critical country efforts such as Somalia, South Sudan and Mali, as well as an increased focus on regional peacebuilding efforts in priority regions such as the Sahel. The regional approach is key to addressing the underlying factors that drive conflict and cross-border threats.

Women play a critical role in conflict prevention and peacebuilding. The Danish Government strongly supports the Secretary-General's ambition to ensure that at least 15 per cent of the Fund's allocations have gender equality as the principal objective. Further efforts are needed to reach this priority goal as soon as possible. Another priority must be to ensure that different channels of financial support for peacebuilding, both from inside and outside of the United Nations, become more integrated and coordinated at the country level.

With the three ongoing, interrelated review processes currently under way, the peace operations review, the review of the peacebuilding architecture, and the review of Security Council resolution 1325 (2000), synergy, coordination and shared analysis are of crucial importance. Denmark will continue to support efforts to bring these processes together with the goal of strengthening the United Nations role in building lasting peace.

Mr. Shingi (Burundi) (*spoke in French*): At the outset, I would like to thank President Kutesa for having convened this important joint debate on the report of the Peacebuilding Commission (A/69/818) and the report of the Secretary-General on the Peacebuilding Fund (A/69/745). I would also like to thank the Secretary-General for the quality of his report on the Peacebuilding Fund, which he has submitted to us for discussion today.

I also thank my colleague Antonio Patriota, Permanent Representative of Brazil and former Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission, for his thorough statement this morning. Once again, I congratulate him on his professionalism and the exceptional competence that he demonstrated throughout his successful mandate chairing the Commission. Even though I have already had the opportunity to do so, I must congratulate once again the representative of Sweden, Mr. Olof Skoog, on taking up the chairmanship of the Peacebuilding Commission and wish him great success during his mandate.

Without going into the details of the Commission's report, I would like to speak to some of its salient passages. First, concerning outreach, assistance and active follow-up, I can say that in Burundi, the Commission, through its Burundi configuration, has participated in mobilizing major regional and international partners in the context of follow-up on mutual commitments undertaken in Geneva in 2012 during the Conference of Burundi's Development Partners. In that regard, the Commission should henceforth rely on the conclusions of the round table held in Bujumbura on 11 and 12 December 2014 in order to focus its action in Burundi on the processes and measures that are indispensable to holding successful democratic elections in 2015, and to accelerating the implementation for the country's sustainable development programme.

Secondly, concerning the promotion of coherence, we in Burundi welcome the fact that the Commission has stepped up its activities for dialogue with major regional partners, particularly during the current period of election fever. I would also like to welcome the trip to Rwanda and to the headquarters of the East African Community carried out in May by the Chair of the Burundi configuration, as well as the frequent meetings of the Commission with neighbouring countries. The States of the region and the main international partners contributed significantly to strengthening the coherence of the assistance provided.

Thirdly, as far as regional aspects of peacebuilding are concerned, I would like to insist on the importance of the regional dimension. The Commission is particularly well placed to promote greater harmony among the subregional, regional, continental and international dimensions of post-conflict response. The experience of the Commission in Burundi has reaffirmed that greater regional and subregional coherence is a key factor in support of peacebuilding efforts. It remains essential to continue to integrate regional and subregional perspectives into the Commission's work.

The experience in the countries on the agenda underscores the importance of the regional experience of conflict. Indeed, many countries may prefer to receive assistance and advice from peer countries from their own region, and regional organizations can be better placed to intervene at the opportune time and to

assist in decision making in order to find appropriate solutions to certain sensitive issues. Quite naturally, we are very pleased that during the period covered by the report before us, the Commission has further focused on the importance of strengthening regional coherence, which is indispensable to helping countries to maintain peace and to prevent a relapse into conflict.

Recent events occurring in countries on the Commission's agenda have served to highlight the fundamental role that neighbouring countries, the African Union and subregional African organizations can and should play as major partners in the political processes and in combating factors of instability. The Commission must therefore even further strengthen its collaboration with the African countries that are also Commission members, specifically immediate neighbours of the countries on its agenda. It should also continue to focus on strengthening its institutional ties and its collaboration with the African Union and interested subregional organizations with the goal of responding more effectively to the problems and opportunities specific to each country.

Fourthly, concerning new cross-cutting issues, such as combating the Ebola epidemic and taking into account the gender dimension, we welcome the fact that the Commission is committed to carrying out an awareness-raising campaign in New York on the possible long-term effects of the Ebola crisis on peace, stability, social cohesion and the economic welfare of the affected countries. With regard to the participation of women in political life during post-conflict periods, the gender-specific dimension of peacebuilding deserves special attention and long-standing commitment. We believe that, in order to begin on a strong foundation, women must be authorized to participate in peace negotiations and be part of transitional post-conflict processes.

Fifthly, my delegation would like to underscore the importance to peacebuilding of the link between the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programmes and security sector reform. Both aspects are like two sides of the same coin. However, DDR is closely linked to security sector reform in a broader sense. Decision-makers and those carrying out those tasks therefore need to understand the ties that exist between the two of them and to deal with them simultaneously and with the same commitment. Success or failure in one or the other sector will quite naturally affect the other. Burundi is prepared to share its vast experience on DDR with other post-conflict countries, via triangular cooperation, with the intervention of the African Union, the United Nations or other international financial organizations.

Lastly, I would like to say a word on national ownership. My delegation believes that national ownership at just one level is not sufficient. We must go beyond that and expand it to local, national, regional and continental levels. Those four levels of ownership are essential to the implementation of the peace process, which we want to be sustainable. Local, national, regional and continental ownership not only strengthen the legitimacy of the implementation of programmes, they also contribute to ensuring the viability of the full national capacity once a peacekeeping operation draws to a close.

Ms. Bolaños Pérez (Guatemala) (*spoke in Spanish*): My delegation would like to recognize the leadership and all the efforts carried out under the chairmanship of Ambassador Antonio de Aguiar Patriota during the eighth session of the Peacebuilding Commission. He laid the groundwork for the review of the peacebuilding architecture that the General Assembly is undertaking. We would like to congratulate Ambassador Olaf Skoog of Sweden for assuming the chairmanship of the commission in 2015.

Ten years after the establishment of the Commission, we believe that the 2015 review is very timely and necessary to guarantee that the Commission is in fact the strategic tool of the United Nations for peacebuilding. We support the terms of reference in identifying the progress achieved and the challenges ahead. We welcome the establishment of the Advisory Group of Experts, headed by Ambassador Gert Rosenthal. We are convinced that the Group will ensure full compliance with the revision process.

It is also important to assist countries emerging from conflict as they attempt to rebuild their democratic institutions and ensure inclusive dialogue for all interested parties, as well as guaranteeing appropriate national reconciliation. Only in that way can we set ourselves on the path to peace, stability and development without the risk of setback. Hence there is a need for a catalysing role and the solid commitment and sustained support provided by the Commission. It is by harmonizing various views and the input of the country-specific configurations, as well as the contributions of the Working Group on Lessons Learned and the Peacebuilding Fund together, that we can build peace

and ensure sustainable development. The Commission is in the right position to promote greater coherency and synergy on the policies and actions undertaken under the three pillars of peacebuilding, that is, in the political, security and development spheres. The synergy among the pillars can be even more productive and effective if we ensure that the goals of each configuration are drawn up against the backdrop of the specific needs on the ground and are structured and shared with all the parties and associated stakeholders, both on the ground and within the United Nations system.

In that regard, we support the advisory role played by the Commission to the Security Council and the General Assembly. That function should serve to further support the overall strengthening of the long-term commitment of both the United Nations and other entities to countries emerging from conflict. The Security Council should pay attention to and seriously consider the advice and recommendations of the Commission when reviewing the mandates of peacekeeping missions.

My delegation would like to reiterate the importance of the gender perspective in peacebuilding. Women are not just the first victims in a conflict, but they also have the potential to be major agents of change, restore the social fabric and to promote inclusive dialogue and national reconciliation. They deserve the continued support of the Commission, particularly in implementing local initiatives to ensure peacebuilding.

We must bolster the role of the Commission to promote harmony and coordination among subregional, regional and international organizations in a post-conflict response. An example of that is the dynamic and coordinated involvement of the Commission in response to the Ebola outbreak in West Africa. Such harmony among regional and subregional organizations, which have a better understanding of the needs and challenges on the ground, should be part of the lessons learned, and is worth repeating in order to continue reinforcing the role played by the country-specific configurations.

Predictable financing is required to implement reconciliation policies that address the root causes that led to a conflict, as well as to ensure inclusive and sustainable development in order to avoid backsliding or a relapse into conflict. We therefore welcome the fact that the Commission's upcoming annual session will be devoted to predictable financing for peacebuilding.

In conclusion, we recognize the support of, and the work carried out by, the Peacebuilding Support Office, headed by Mr. Oscar Fernández-Taranco and his team. That input will be vitally important as we review the peacebuilding architecture. We reiterate the commitment of our delegation to the Commission, and we welcome this opportunity to express our views in that regard.

Mr. Bhattarai (Nepal): I thank the President for organizing this important and timely joint debate on the annual reports of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) (A/69/818) and of the Secretary-General on the Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) (A/69/745). This is a good opportunity for Member States to exchange views and reflect on their ideas on the work of the Commission and that of the Fund.

I take this opportunity to congratulate and welcome Ambassador Olof Skoog, Permanent Representative of Sweden, as Chair of the PBC for 2015, as well as to pledge my delegation's support for his constructive work ahead. I also wish to put on record my delegation's appreciation to Ambassador Antonio de Aguiar Patriota, Permanent Representative of Brazil, for his dynamic role and outstanding contribution as Chair of the PBC in 2014.

Nepal attaches great significance to the work of the United Nations peacebuilding architecture and has been deeply involved in its work in different capacities. As a member of the Commission's Organizational Committee and one of the top troop-contributing countries to United Nations peacekeeping operations, and with our own experiences in post-conflict management at home, Nepal is committed to further contributing to the work of the Commission.

My delegation welcomes the analytical approach taken in the report of the PBC. The report has analysed the challenges, gaps and the way forward in the peacebuilding architecture. The report on the Peacebuilding Fund mentions that the overall utilization of operations and activities of the Fund has been at a satisfactory level. It also shows why much-needed technical, developmental and financial support should be provided to those countries that are in conflict situations.

The report of the Peacebuilding Commission rightly underscores the centrality of sustainable peace and security through a coherent and coordinated response, as well as the need to ensure national ownership,

inclusive national processes, gender mainstreaming, youth employment and job creation, the marshalling of adequate resources for peacebuilding and the sharing of experiences and lessons learned, in particular through South-South and triangular cooperation.

The report also clearly demonstrates the importance of partnership in the peace process. Nepal believes that partnership among the PBC, international financial institutions, regional and subregional organizations — including through South-South and triangular cooperation — and other relevant international actors is indeed critical in harmonizing such support to make peacebuilding efforts more effective. The strategic development framework must be prepared based on wider consultation to ensure better reflection of national priorities. The report rightly focuses on having a single overall planning document around which all international support must revolve.

In that connection, it is relevant to recall that, in its resolution 2086 (2013), the Security Council highlights and reaffirms the important interlinkage in the context of multidimensional peacekeeping missions. It also expresses the Council's continued willingness to make use of the advisory, advocacy and resource mobilization roles of the Commission in peacebuilding activities. And it also emphasizes the need for further harnessing those roles in advancing and supporting an integrated and coherent approach with respect to multidimensional peacekeeping mandates on behalf of the countries on its agenda.

We recall with appreciation the support provided by the United Nations Mission in Nepal to the Nepali peace process, as well as the continued contribution of the United Nations Peace Fund for Nepal. Among other things, the Fund has contributed to implementing Security Council resolutions 1325 (2000) and 1820 (2008) through a dedicated national plan of action, which is the first of its kind in South Asia. The plan intervenes in key areas including participation, protection and prevention, promotion, relief and recovery, resources-management and monitoring and evaluation. An inter-ministry implementation committee coordinates its execution, and a ministerial steering committee ensures its oversight. It is one of the pioneer works of the Government of Nepal with a positive impact on the country's peace process. Encouraged by the continuing positive results, as also shown by the plan's 2014 mid-term monitoring report, the Government is working to localize the plan at the subnational level.

In that context, the holding of the first-ever annual session of the Commission, in June 2014, back to back with the annual stakeholders' meeting of the Peacebuilding Fund, was an important step forward. The annual session of the PBC enabled closer interaction and engagement among the relevant stakeholders at United Nations Headquarters and in the field, as well as in the capitals of Member States. My delegation underlines the importance of institutionalizing the annual session of the PBC, with the aim of reinforcing the coherence and relevance of its work and offering a forum for engaging in substantive discussions on selected themes and guiding the PBC policy orientation.

My delegation looks forward to this year's annual session of the PBC, to be held in June 2015, on the theme "Predictable financing for peacebuilding — breaking the silos", as an opportunity for all to show the requisite political will and score a real breakthrough with regard to silos.

This year is important for the PBC, particularly in view of the review of the peacebuilding architecture to improve the peacebuilding capacity of the United Nations system by, among other things, strengthening the performance and impact of the peacebuilding architecture with a view to realizing its full potential in line with the agreed terms of reference.

As mandated by the General Assembly and the Security Council, a comprehensive review will be held throughout the year by both organs, whereby it is expected to take stock of the challenges faced by the Commission. We must find ways to improve its relationship with the Security Council, the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council, with the aim of the effective functioning of the PBC, with visible results. In that context, my delegation is of the view that the review of the peacebuilding architecture should go hand in hand with the review of United Nations peace operations that is under way. My delegation emphasizes that all reform measures should be implemented in a system-wide, coordinated, complementary and holistic manner.

Despite the numerous contexts, which vary from country to country, we see many commonalities in the approaches to and building blocks of peacebuilding. We must learn from our past experiences. In that context, the Working Group on Lessons Learned must be developed and fully utilized as a learning and disseminating platform of the best practices and lessons learned in the country configurations, as well

as in the broader peacebuilding community. We believe that a better follow-up and stronger integration of such findings throughout peacebuilding activities will help enhance our effectiveness on the ground significantly.

I wish to conclude with a fervent call on all to reflect on the opportunity that the year 2015 offers in our work, and to redouble our effort for making the United Nations peacebuilding architecture more effective and efficient to meet the aspirations of conflict-stricken people for peace, stability and sustained economic growth.

Ms. Grignon (Kenya): I thank the President for convening today's meeting and for the opportunity to address the Assembly. We greatly appreciate and commend the Permanent Representative of Brazil, Ambassador Antonio de Aguiar Patriota, for his engaging and efficient stewardship of the Peacebuilding Commission (PBC) during the period covered by the annual report (A/69/818). I also thank him for the comprehensive report and for his statement.

The delegation of Kenya associates itself with the statement made on behalf of the members of the Peacebuilding Commission. We also thank and express appreciation for the hard work of the Peacebuilding Support Office.

I take this opportunity to congratulate and welcome the Permanent Representative of Sweden, Ambassador Olof Skoog, as the new Chair of the PBC. I thank him for his recent visit to the countries most affected by the Ebola virus, namely, Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, and for his report to the members. From that initial engagement with Ambassador Skoog, we are confident that the momentum of work of the Peacebuilding Commission that was built up by the previous Chair will be maintained and consolidated under his leadership.

I also take this opportunity to thank and commend the Chairs of the various country-specific configurations for the important work that they continue to do. We look forward to peaceful elections and the consolidation of democracy in Guinea and Burundi.

My delegation notes with satisfaction the growing importance of PBC and the Peacebuilding Fund in post-conflict situations in various parts of Africa, as summarized in the two annual reports. While there have been challenges, there are also important lessons for a better future. It is evident from the two reports that peacebuilding is multidimensional. It integrates political, security and development efforts in countries emerging from conflicts.

Peacebuilding needs to be integrated into the entire continuum and architecture of peace and security. That is why we believe that successful peacebuilding and sustainable development are interlinked and require the involvement of all members of our society. It is also why the peacebuilding architecture needs to integrate the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000) in order to ensure the active participation and involvement of women in peacebuilding.

The success of peacebuilding initiatives depends upon political leadership, sustained international political engagement and favourable regional support. In 2014, the Peacebuilding Commission applied all three with great success, as evident from its early intervention that alerted and marshalled the international community to respond to the Ebola crisis. Its continued successful engagement in the Burundi political process without relapse into hostilities is another of its success stories.

Those success stories give us hope for the future, yet we must say that much more still needs to be done to ensure that the Peacebuilding Commission fills the existing gap in the conflict cycle and within the United Nations work that it was created 10 years ago to address.

Peacebuilding is a long-term undertaking that relies on sustained financial, technical and political support, as well as meaningful collaboration with regional actors and other peace interlocutors. As such, if the Peacebuilding Commission is a New York-based advisory entity, its future success may require deliberate efforts to deepen existing relations with regional and subregional organizations, particularly the African Union.

The symbiotic relationships between the Peacebuilding Commission and the regional entities will nourish the Commission with unrivalled local knowledge, including possible priority areas, while the Commission provides the best available international expertise, fundraising capabilities and good offices, all of which are crucial in the achievement of sustainable peace. National ownership and involvement are very important, from the setting of priorities, the designing of an implementation framework and in actual implementation.

Allow me to emphasize the important role that the United Nations and its subsidiary organs have in conflict prevention, besides providing assistance during recovery

from conflict and reconstruction to sustain peace and security. It is better and cost-effective to avoid conflicts altogether or to manage them early through preventive interventions. Such preventive interventions can be provided efficiently by the Commission. However, the peacebuilding architecture needs a comprehensive review. That is why the delegation of Kenya welcomes the terms of reference and commends the forthcoming review. As we welcome the review, we hope it will be comprehensive, inclusive, transparent and practical. We also hope it will draw from very useful lessons learned.

During the ongoing review of the peacebuilding architecture, my delegation hopes that the review will define the role of both the Commission and the Fund in conflict prevention and in providing safeguards against relapse into conflict through people-centred approaches and engagement. We also hope that the architecture will be better defined in its mandate, functions and resources and take its true place within the United Nations system.

Finally, allow me to assure Ambassador Skoog of our delegation's support for the success in his mandate.

Mr. Espinoza (Chile) (*spoke in Spanish*): Allow me to begin my statement by acknowledging and expressing our appreciation for the work of Ambassador Antonio de Aguiar Patriota, outgoing Chair of the Peacebuilding Commission. We also wish Ambassador Olof Skoog success in his work as the new Chair of the Commission in a particularly important year and assure him of our cooperation. We welcome the introduction of the report of the Peacebuilding Commission (A/69/818) and the report on the Peacebuilding Fund (A/69/745). They provide us an opportunity to review successes and to recognize existing and new challenges ahead.

We support the Commission's emphasis on institution-building and social cohesion in seeking to ensure that conflict-affected countries achieve lasting peace and do not relapse into a spiral of violence and confrontation. The role of the Peacebuilding Commission is therefore as relevant today as it was 10 years ago. To that end, the Commission requires constant and coordinated financial support among the various national, bilateral and multilateral actors, so that it can create political conditions conducive to sustaining peacebuilding programmes in the medium and long terms.

Among those efforts, we would underscore the usefulness and the flexibility of the Peacebuilding Fund to address and adapt itself to needs on the ground. In such efforts, we must clearly take into account the priorities and the expectations of countries that are the object of such efforts, while making national ownership a reality.

We reiterate the importance of the systematic inclusion of the gender approach in the peacebuilding process. Equal participation by women in conflict prevention and resolution and in peacebuilding is key. Women are dynamic agents of change and, as such, bring credibility to missions, facilitate the dialogue process, assist in data collection within communities and promote education, among other things.

Positive experiences could be replicated if a greater percentage of Peacebuilding Fund resources were to be earmarked for projects aimed at promoting the empowerment of women and gender equality. We also underscore the role of regional and subregional organizations in peacebuilding efforts. Regional coherence is necessary in order for the policies implemented to be lasting and establish a containment framework to prevent the recurrence of conflicts. We hope that efforts to create or strengthen specific partnerships that promote peacebuilding will continue.

Illicit financial flows are an ever-present barrier to the peacebuilding process. They affect the transparency and efficiency of financial management. Therefore, we support the Commission's role in determining the policies required to strengthen international and regional initiatives to combat illicit financial flows.

We reiterate our appeal to continue strengthening the consultative function of the Commission with the General Assembly and the Security Council in order to ensure due complementarity and coordination in peacebuilding efforts and in conflict prevention — for instance, during the transition of peacekeeping operations, or through better interaction with the Chairs of the various configurations in important moments relating to mandates.

This year's review of the peacebuilding architecture will be an opportunity to acknowledge the lessons of the past, improve the United Nations system's capacity to support the peacebuilding process and prevent conflicts. We emphasize the importance of maintaining synergies between those efforts and the reviews of the High-level Independent Panel on Peace Operations and of the implementation of resolution 1325 (2000). We look forward to the conclusions of those reviews

and have faith in Mr. Rosenthal's work as Chair of the review.

The Acting President: We have heard the last speaker in today's debate. The Assembly has thus concluded this stage of its consideration of agenda items 29 and 109.

Before we adjourn, I would like to express our special thanks to the interpreters for staying past the time limit for today's meeting.

The meeting rose at 1.50 p.m.